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Agreement in Algiers

The formation of a unity Cabinet by the de Gaulle and Giraud forces is the most important step toward the creation of a new France since the emergence of the Fighting French movement. At present writing seven members of what is to be a nine-man governing group have already been selected, and the formation of the broad lines of French policy is getting under way.

It seems clear that de Gaulle has won several initial victories. The first is the absence thus far in the Cabinet of any deep-dyed Vichyites. To be sure, General Georges, who may be chosen for an important military post, has arrived in North Africa under circumstances that several observers regard as suspicious, having "escaped" from Nazi-held France at the exactly right moment. And Jean Monnet, who is likely to head up the finances of the new government, is not exactly a liberal, although he has the merit (for a French financier) of being pro-British. Another de Gaulle victory is the selection as the seventh or "neutral" member of General Georges Catroux, who has been friendly toward the Fighting French. But perhaps the greatest was the personal triumph involved in the spontaneous and enthusiastic reception which the people of Algiers gave de Gaulle when he arrived. It was a symbol of the forces which have all along prevented the carrying out of whatever plans may have existed in American governing circles to shunt the de Gaulists aside and build another France in the image of the old Vichy.

Two Outposts of Fortress Europe

The Italians have good reasons for expecting an early invasion of Sicily or Sardinia, or both. They know exactly what the conquest of these two islands would

mean to the United Nations in their attack against Fortress Europe. Sardinia is almost exactly the size of New Hampshire and has about the same population as Oregon. Sicily is a little larger than Vermont, has more people than Massachusetts, and lies just ninety miles northeast of the African coast. When both islands are in Allied hands, our convoys to India will at last be safe in the Sicilian Straits.

Both islands, but particularly Sardinia, would make excellent bases for Allied bombers. The whole Italian mainland would lie open to continuous attack from the air, and the Italian fleet would no longer have any safe harbor in which to hide. Even Trieste and the naval base at Pola—the two most distant Italian targets—are only 400 airline miles from Sardinia. Most of the other Italian cities are so much nearer that our bombers could have fighter-plane protection when attacking them. Beyond the range of fighter escorts, they could also attack the cities north of the Alps. Munich is about 525 miles from Sardinia, Vienna is 615 and Budapest is 675. The German industries which have moved to the east would be exposed to the same dangers as if they had stayed in the Ruhr.

Another Road to Berlin

But there is a third reason why the Axis fears to lose Sardinia. The smaller island of Corsica lies just to the northward, across a strait that is only eight miles wide. Against Allied planes based on Sardinian airfields, it would be very difficult to hold. And Corsica is near enough to Genoa (130 miles) and Marseilles (185 miles) so that an Allied landing either in northern Italy or the Rhone Valley could have the necessary fighter-plane protection. In other words, by stepping

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from island to island, it might be possible to by-pass central Italy and strike directly for objectives of greater military importance.

It is true that the Allied leaders might hesitate to leave the Italian army on their flank, but again they might decide that this was a risk to be taken in the hope of ending the war swiftly. The Italians don't know which decision has been made; all they do know is that they must hold on to Sicily and Sardinia at almost any cost. And the cost may prove to be very high. An Italian army defeated in Sicily might be ferried at night across the Strait of Messina, which is scarcely wider than the Hudson, but it would lose almost all its equipment. Sardinia, on the other hand, is 140 miles from the mainland, and an Italian army defeated there would have no better chance of being rescued than the army defeated in Tunisia. Today the Italians must be wondering how many more divisions they could afford to lose at a single blow.

A Super War Cabinet

For months The New Republic has been calling for a single unified administration of our war program in civilian hands, in line with the provisions of the Pepper-Kilgore-Tolan war-mobilization bill. The President's new order appointing James F. Byrnes Director of War Mobilization appears, at first appraisal, to follow the Pepper-Kilgore recommendations very closely. The order contains the most extensive grant of power yet made by the President to a subordinate in this war, and it is definitely a move in the right direction. However, there are still some questions we would like to have answered.

The President's order clearly gives Byrnes all the power needed to do a thorough job of war mobilization. But if directives and executive orders were enough, war production would have been running full speed ahead without obstacles long ago. Donald Nelson once had a sweeping order placed in his hands too, but he did not choose to use it fully enough to do the job confronting him.

Byrnes's Chance

Will Jimmy Byrnes use the powers now vested in him to "unify . . . production, procurement, transportation and distribution of civilian and military supplies, materials and products"—or simply to continue and extend the umpiring job he has been performing as Economic Stabilizer? The first course, the only one that could be counted on for real results, will require an abrupt about-face in Byrnes's methods, which were described in some detail in our pages two weeks ago. Byrnes is now Donald Nelson's boss. He stands between Nelson and the army production men with whom Nelson and Charles Wilson have done battle for so long. Even in the last week army men have tried to gain control over the scheduling of critical components

for aircraft production. Byrnes will now have to back Wilson all the way if he is to mobilize production.

We hope Byrnes will give an early and strong answer to these and the many other questions which demand decision. Now, for the first time, full mobilization for war is in our grasp. Byrnes has it in his power to plan and bring about the orderly flow of manpower and materials into plants and the delivery of civilian and military items where and when they are needed—if he moves courageously forward.

Turmoil in the OPA

The coalition of certain groups of business men, farmers and their friends in Congress who are exerting all their strength to knock out the present price-control system, last week were crowding in for the kill. Their strategy was to push for turning food-price control over to Food Administrator Chester Davis, whom they trust to carry out their wishes. Davis' testimony before the Senate Committee on Agriculture last week was evidence that he is deserving of their trust on one major point at least. The question was the subsidy program proposed for rolling back the retail prices of meats, butter and coffee. Davis dodged the issue and throughout the hearing refrained from any expression of approval for rolling back any prices at all.

Various congressional committees put their investigative powers to work to back up this anti-price-control bloc in their eager plans to dismember the OPA. Senator Byrd and others leveled blasts against subsidies, Byrd describing them as "another long step toward totalitarian government," and insisting that the only sound way to combat inflation was by strict wage control.

Meanwhile, within the OPA, Prentiss Brown was giving aid and comfort to the enemy by his support of Deputy Administrator Lou Maxon, former customers' man in the Detroit advertising world, best known since coming to the OPA for his fight against grade labeling and standardization. Disregarding consumer and labor protests against Maxon's continuance in office, Brown agreed to Maxon's demands that he be made "general manager" of the OPA. As a result, the high-ranking officials in the OPA who had all along sought to use it as a weapon on the people's side, handed in their resignations. The group was headed by Kenneth Galbraith and was reported to include Paul O'Leary and Thomas I. Emerson. There can be little question now that the OPA has become useless in the fight for a militant control and roll-back of prices.

Coal Strike against Whom?

The end of the second coal truce meant, as we went to press, that the coal strike was again on and that the mining of coal was being seriously reduced. It is difficult to believe that John L. Lewis will be able to keep his men out very long. There is general belief among Washington observers that an agreement between

Lewis and the operators would be reached in a few days, and that Lewis had brought his men out in order to drive a harder bargain. If this should turn out to be unwarranted optimism, Americans will find themselves in the midst of one of the most fateful strikes in their history. For, whatever may be said of the spontaneous strikes that have been cropping up all over the country because of the workers' discontent with high prices and the failure of the war collective-bargaining machinery to function well, the continuance of the coal strike will be the responsibility of John L. Lewis himself. He has been offered every facility of collective bargaining. He has consistently refused to use the machinery of the WLB. In this case a strike is an act of defiance of the American government and an act done in lethal disregard of the war in which we are engaged.

More Food, Not Less

The international food conference at Hot Springs has, in its recommendations at least, avoided the danger foreseen by advance commentators that it might set up machinery to restrict output in the interest of powerful groups of producers, without sufficient consideration of the world's need for a more adequate diet. It has done this by concentrating its attention on problems of nutrition, a study which could not help but lead to the conclusion that if everyone is to have enough to maintain health, what we need is not less and more expensive food, but more and cheaper.

The conference correctly pointed out, however, that in order to achieve this goal it will not do for agriculture merely to build up the so-called "surpluses" which characterized the depression years. The world must, first of all, have freedom from fear so that every nation will not be tempted, at uneconomic cost, to seek a wholly self-contained economy. And the world economy must be an expanding one, so that the industrial consumers may have the purchasing power to buy what is produced. To attain these objectives lies outside the competence of conferees considering food alone. Yet they can and do contribute by preparing to collect pertinent statistical information, widen nutritional education, stabilize international commodity markets and work out better methods of distribution.

Their Masters' Voice

A survey of recent public-opinion polls reveals that President Roosevelt is the choice of an overwhelming majority of Democrats for 1944 and that a ticket composed of Roosevelt and Vice President Wallace would triumph over a Republican ticket of Governor Dewey and General MacArthur by a vote of 54 percent to 46 percent. Although Dewey is at present the most popular of several Republican possibilities, as he was at this stage of the 1940 campaign, and General MacArthur is undoubtedly a powerful drawing card, we are by no means certain that a Dewey-MacArthur ticket is the strongest one the Republicans could offer

the electorate. That the President is the strongest—indeed the only serious contender—among the Democratic candidates can hardly be doubted. A poll of the radio audience that listened to a stormy debate on the question of the fourth term found only 51 percent opposed to another term for the President, an astonishingly small figure in view of the kind of audience that listens to such programs and that feels sufficiently vehement to write letters on such an issue. Possibly the most important of the various recent polls is one by the American Institute of Public Opinion, which revealed that in five of the nation's major production areas, two out of five war workers stayed away from the polls in 1942. Three-fourths of these non-voters were Democrats. Since these vital war-production areas coincide with electoral regions that will determine the result of the coming election, it should be obvious that Mr. Roosevelt and his party must concentrate on providing the war workers with incentives to go to the polls in 1944.

Republicans Prepare for Pre-War

The so-called "post-war" advisory council appointed by the Republican National Committee to prepare "a realistic peacetime program" obviously has its eyes fixed on the past rather than on the future. It not only omits Mr. Willkie, who is the party's outstanding and most popular thinker on post-war problems but, even more significantly, is heavily overweighted with isolationists. Its domestic point of view is indicated by the adjective "reactionary" applied to the New Deal; the kind of progress which it expects to seek is thus likely to be a walking backwards. One of its more prominent members, Sen. Robert A. Taft, has already gone on record with a condemnation of the post-war report of the National Resources Planning Board.

This is all according to form, and little else was to be expected. One difficulty, however, puzzles us, and we shall watch keenly how it develops. The Republican Party has always leaned heavily on both industrialists and ex-soldiers. But prominent industrialists and soldiers are agreed that business and government must coöperate to provide full employment in the



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post-war world, and that social security is a *sine qua non* if the peace is not to be lost. Where will the Republican organization get either its money or its votes if its main cohorts walk out on its program?

The Poll Tax Again

The anti-poll-tax bill has passed the House, 265 to 110, and now goes to the Senate, where it died last year because of the threat of a filibuster by a few die-hard Southern Senators. The fact that the bill has been sent to the Senate earlier this session makes a filibuster seem less likely, and those who are in favor of the bill are more hopeful of its passage than ever before.

The debate in the House was marked by an impromptu speech made by a twenty-one-year-old sailor from the public gallery. It was the day's most effective speech for the anti-poll-tax bill.

After asking for the floor and getting no response from the startled presiding officer, the sailor asked the representatives of the people below, "Why should we be taxed to vote? Why should a man be taxed to vote when he can fight without paying?"

"I am a man in the service," he said. "I speak for thousands who cannot be here. I would like to ask you why a man has to pay tribute for the right to vote."

As always happens in such cases, the young man had to finish his speech in the guardroom. But the questions he asked still reverberate through the corridors of the Capitol and still remain unanswered.

Race Riot in Mobile

Another shameful chapter was added last week to our history of race-rioting when whites attacked Negroes in the Alabama Shipyards in Mobile. White workers, estimated by the company at 500, and by their victims at 5,000 in number, fell upon Negro workers, clubbing and stoning them, injuring a score. The reason—some twelve Negro workers had been upgraded to welding jobs.

Race problems in the South are too complicated to permit a simple assignment of blame. Nevertheless, responsibility for harmonious race relations in defense industries must be shared by both capital and labor. Employers must be made to realize that the purely negative institution of company guards—always prejudiced in favor of the white workers—is an insufficient discharge of their social responsibility. Trade unions must face an even greater responsibility in educating their membership. So long as race relations in industry are at the mercy of brutal police forces and prejudiced or indifferent trade unions, riots will continue to jeopardize not only our war production but the safety of the country as a whole.

Machinists to Quit the AFL

Harry Bates of the Bricklayers' Union has been authorized by the AFL to get in touch with CIO President Philip Murray with a view to resuming peace

negotiations as soon as possible. Almost at the same time, the International Association of Machinists completed its membership poll on the subject of withdrawing from the AFL, with the result that the IAM executive board now has the power to withdraw from the Federation whenever it considers it wise to do so.

This action by the 500,000-odd machinists dates a long way back to a twenty-year-old quarrel between the AFL Machinists and Carpenters. Big Bill Hutcheson of the Carpenters, John L. Lewis' great friend, contends that his millwrights are entitled to certain work which Harvey Brown, president of the Machinists, contends was assigned to machinists by a decision made twenty years ago.

Coming at the same time as Lewis' application for re-admission to the AFL, the Machinists' threat of secession is important in calculating the future of labor.

Revival of the FEPC

A step in the right direction was taken last week with revival of the Fair Economic Practice Committee under the chairmanship of the Rt. Rev. Mgr. Francis Haas, dean of the School of Social Studies of the Catholic University. Father Haas has an excellent record as a liberal, and is to be congratulated on his courage in accepting a post which previous candidates had rejected as though it were a hot potato. The FEPC will need courage to handle the tough jobs ahead of it.

Grand Strategy at Washington

IN SPITE OF THE FACT that the statements of Roosevelt and Churchill concerning their deliberations at Washington were brief and deliberately vague, in order not to give too much information to the enemy, we are justified in assuming that two great questions were settled, and in a way that few expected. These questions have been debated in public and at length for many months. One is, can the Axis be defeated from the air, or must we invade Germany and Italy by land as well? The other is, should we defeat Hitler first and then turn to Japan, or should we begin by directing our main effort to Asia?

Mr. Churchill's speech to Congress, as well as what is now actually proceeding in Europe, indicates that the answer to the controversy over air war is to choose not either, but both—first bombing and then, if that does not bring surrender, invasion. This answer is so sensible that it is strange nobody advanced it before. The Allies have not stinted on air power; they have as much as if they had scarcely counted on land warfare at all. They also have the armies and equipment for invasion. It so happens, however, that the air arm has become usable first, because of the difficulty we have experienced in building and keeping afloat enough shipping to transport and supply great armies. Even if that were not so,

it would be good sense to use strategic bombing in great force to weaken the enemy's power of resistance before assaulting him otherwise.

That does not necessarily mean that invasion will be long postponed. Full-scale bombing has now been proceeding for many weeks. A landing or landings of some kind there will almost certainly be before the summer is over, even if only to bring our air bases nearer their targets. It is quite possible that the decision as to whether to do more than penetrate the periphery of Fortress Europe and establish bridgeheads, however, will depend on Hitler's action. If he becomes heavily engaged in Russia, it will be both easier and more necessary to assail him with full force in the West. If he does not, the plan may be to take more time in order to soften his rear and bring greater power to bear.

Likewise the final authorities on strategy appear to have declined to choose between the alternatives of offensive action against Germany or Japan, but are planning both at the same time. With overwhelming air power, and with naval forces greatly superior to those of the Eastern aggressor, it is no longer necessary to think of a concentration of forces against one or the other. This is particularly true, since the opening of the Mediterranean has released a large amount of shipping for the passage to India. There was never a need to think of transporting great armies to Asia; Japan herself has made her conquests with relatively few men in each region assaulted, except in China, where she is heavily outnumbered by the Chinese. It is a question rather of equipping the forces necessary to interrupt her communications, come within striking distance of her vitals and open the pathway to China. Apparently this now may be done without robbing the armies opposing Hitler and Mussolini of all that they can use. It is not likely, to be sure, that the Burma Road can be opened before next fall or many heavy blows struck before 1944, but neither is it likely that the *coup de grâce* can be delivered to Hitler before next year. Tokyo may fall somewhat later than Berlin, but it is not necessary to think of finishing one war before beginning the other.

These answers, if we have correctly assessed them, are directly traceable to two fundamental policies, the importance of which has not fully appeared even yet. One was the political risk taken by President Roosevelt in adopting a program of production for total war, in spite of the pinching and complaint which it was bound to cause in a democracy, especially in one not threatened with immediate invasion and immune from heavy bombings. The other was the decision to begin operations by cleaning the Axis out of Africa and ensuring passage through the Mediterranean. Now that we hold the cross-roads of the world, we can strike not only in either direction, but in both. The larger pattern of the war is beginning to appear, as the shuttles of combat begin to fly faster.

Catholics and Liberals

THE LETTER FROM DR. FRANCIS MCMAHON on page 765 of this issue seems to us to make far too simple a complicated question. In the first place, Professor Beals is not empowered to speak on behalf of "the liberals" in regard to the Catholic Church. Neither, for that matter, is The New Republic. Indeed, we gravely doubt that there is any unified attitude among "the liberals" on this subject.

The fact that many thousands of Catholics are fighting and dying on behalf of the United States in this war is of course entirely irrelevant to the question of the ultimate aims of the Church as a worldwide organization. Many thousands of Catholics are also fighting and dying on behalf of Italian fascism, and German Nazism. Many thousands more have fought and died on behalf of Franco's fascism in Spain, and other causes that are dubious or worse.

We cannot believe that Dr. McMahon would deny that in its ultimate theology, the Catholic Church is authoritarian, and therefore anti-liberal. But there is no necessary relation between this fact and giving aid to secular, political and military totalitarianism in Germany, Italy or Spain. In supporting Franco and Mussolini, and in carrying on a sort of disarmed truce with Hitler in Germany, the Catholic Church has been acting, not as a religious body but as an economic and political corporate entity that has huge possessions and an enormous spiritual and emotional stake in these as well as other countries. Over and over again in the past, the Church has been wrong in these matters. It could be wrong again. It could be wrong now. Indeed, there is accumulating evidence that the makers of policy for the Church in Italy begin to believe that they have been wrong on some important points, including their attitude toward Soviet Russia.

Speaking for ourselves, and not for "the liberals" as a whole, and addressing only the American Catholics, we would answer Dr. McMahon's questions as follows:

We believe that regardless of their final theological beliefs, the majority of American Catholics are and have always been loyal citizens of a democratic regime. But there is a minority, a "lunatic fringe," which insists on importing into this country ideas alien to the democratic tradition and to the majority of their fellow Catholics. We would hope to see the decent majority of Catholics do far more than at present in seeking to reduce the power of the Coughlinites and the Christian Fronters, who are fascist at heart and whose practices should have no place in free America.

We would further urge decent Catholics to reconsider their present policy of trying to enact Catholic doctrine into federal, state and municipal law. Both in logic and in common sense, we feel the Catholics should confine their disciplines to their own communicants, instead of trying to force everyone in the whole

country to live up to these precepts, as for instance in the matter of contraception.

It seems to us unsound and unhealthy that all motion pictures should be subject to Catholic censorship.

It seems to us unsound and unhealthy that the post-office censorship (which exists in fact though not in name) should be dictated by Catholics.

We ask the Catholics to reconsider their present policy of trying to destroy instantly by economic pressure, through withdrawal of advertising or cancellation of subscriptions, every newspaper, magazine or radio station which tries to discuss, even in the most moderate and friendly terms, the social and political policies of the Catholic Church. Such economic pressure is a violation of free speech, and in the long run the Catholics, as a small minority of the total population, have more to lose than to gain by such a policy.

We wish the good Catholics, like Dr. McMahon, would work harder than they do to end the embarrassing identification of the Catholic Church with corrupt political machines in a number of great Northern cities. It must be a source of humiliation to them to see the Church in New York City so nearly coterminous with the sorry spectacle of Tammany Hall, or to see it give its tacit approval and its open coöperation to an outrageous anti-democrat like Hague in New Jersey. Yet one finds little or no record of any real effort to improve these conditions.

We wish the American Church, which is now the most powerful Catholic body outside Italy, would use its influence for a sensible and moderate political policy on the part of the Church as a whole, or at least would try to keep up with realism and moderation when they appear in the Church in Europe. At present, as noted, it looks as though Soviet Russia and the Vatican might soon come to an agreement. Yet most American Catholics continue to slambang away at Russia with their eyes shut.

We wish the good Catholics in this country could persuade the bad Catholics to moderate their anti-Semitism, which has recently assumed such ominous forms in the slums of Brooklyn and Boston, to name only two places.

It is no answer to tell us that Protestants, also, are guilty of these things. For the Catholic Church assumes, in fact and not just in theory, a far greater responsibility for the conduct of its individual members than does any other religion widely practised in the United States.

Finally, we wish that good political democrats among the Catholics, like Dr. McMahon, would not show such hypersensitivity about public discussion of the Church. On most subjects these men rank among the best citizens of this country. They have a magnificent record of fighting for social welfare, not only for Catholics but for all Americans. Yet they do their best to silence all public discussion by insisting on treating

the Church as a monolithic whole and defending its good and its bad aspects with equal vigor. This attitude is largely responsible for the fact that serious public discussion of the Church is almost impossible in America today, and that the question is debated for the most part on the level of Father Coughlin on one side and the Ku Klux Klan on the other. The fact that serious discussion has so largely been driven underground of course does not mean that it has been ended. The Catholics may, indeed, have a false and dangerous sense of security based only on the fact that they prevent the debate from coming out into the open.

We feel that the good American Catholics might do more than at present to bring up the level of Catholic journalism in this country. It is not far from the truth to say that about 90 percent of the Catholic press seems to be at the level of about the worst 10 percent of the Church. There are exceptions, like the ably edited *Commonweal*; but they are very few. It is discouraging to print such a thoughtful and friendly discussion of Catholic problems as the one by George West in our issue of March 1 and then see the comment come in from the Catholic papers—long, badly written diatribes against Mr. West and *The New Republic* on the simple but wholly false assumption that any public discussion must grow out of mortal enmity. We are sure that thoughtful, intelligent men like Dr. McMahon and Dr. John A. Ryan must blush to reflect that after all these years so much Catholic journalism is on such a low level.

Profound currents of change are sweeping the world. The end of the war will see many old institutions challenged more vigorously than ever before. No institution, not even one so powerful as the Church, can permanently survive by turning its back on honest and critical examination of its strength and weakness. We hope to see Dr. McMahon and the others like him inside the Church lead the way in searching reëxamination of its values and its usefulness in the years to come.

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A Journal of Opinion

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'After the Comintern

THE END OF THE COMINTERN will evoke from the sense of the past even of non-communists a mingled nostalgia and sadness, from their sense of the present a realistic analysis, and from their sense of the future a new grimness of determination.

The chorus of approval or of derision and doubt that greeted the news that the Comintern was now officially dead had little room in it for any note of sadness. Yet many all over the world must have felt that this was the dream they had lost. Socialism has been from the beginning an international movement. Part of the appeal that Lenin's doctrine had during World War I and immediately afterward lay in his uncompromising internationalism, in contrast with the accommodation that the Social Democratic leaders had made to the national dangers. From an outlook that rejected nationalism as a bourgeois mask, it was but a step to one that embraced internationalism as an instrument of world revolution. Here were the twin appeals of liberation and globalism. Here was something that carried the revolutionary mind beyond the flaming ramparts of a circumscribed world to an apocalyptic vision of a world destroyed, a world liberated, a world rebuilt.

Obviously all that could not be undone by a stroke of Dmitrov's pen—or even Stalin's—in May, 1943. Its undoing was the work of two decades. The seeds of it were already implicit in Lenin's thinking when the first congress of delegates which was to form the Third International was summoned to Moscow in March, 1919. For Lenin and his fledgling proletarian state were beating back one armed intervention after another: what more effective idea could he have had than to create Communist Parties in Europe and America to rally the proletariat of other countries to the defense of the Soviet Union? It was the old world that was being raised up to redress the balance of the new.

And in one sense it worked. The Soviet state was in actual truth surrounded by a ring of hostile states that would have liked nothing better than to crush the life out of it. Whatever may have been truth or fiction in the later myth of capitalist encirclement, it was true enough at the time. The English workers who in 1920 refused to load munitions and supplies for the White armies in Russia were the first important instance of how the International could be used at once as an instrument of world revolution and of Soviet policy.

What happened in the next two decades was that the second objective crowded out the first. And this not for one reason or because of one personality, but because of a whole complex of causes. Lenin understood as early as 1921 that the world revolution was not just around the corner. The "law of uneven and combined development," which both Lenin and Trot-

sky spoke of, meant that the prospects of revolution in each country were related to its own particular constellation of such factors as tempo of industrial development, antagonism of social forces, revolutionary consciousness of the workers, disciplined leadership. The internal problems of rebuilding Russia soon transcended the task of helping other proletariats to their revolution. The triumph of Stalin over Trotsky meant not only that the task of "building socialism in one country" was to take precedence over foreign action, but that even in the field of foreign affairs the needs of the Soviet Union were to come first.

When Hitler came to power in Germany, raising the greatest threat that Russia had thus far encountered, the issue—if any chance had still remained of reversing Stalin's policy—was effectively closed. Stalin and Litvinov set themselves to mending the breaks in the fence of Soviet foreign policy. "Collective security" and "peace is indivisible" supplemented Stalin's statement that communism was not an export article. The Communist Parties were still used by the International, and the International by the Soviet Union, but the world revolution was completely dead. There is a symbolic irony in Henry Cassidy's report (in his new book, "Moscow Dateline") that Dmitrov and the bureaus of the Comintern were moved to the east along with the other apparatus of Soviet industry and Soviet defense during the Moscow evacuation of 1941.

And there is a deep historic meaning also in the fact that in the very process of dying the Comintern served Soviet policy. It will be clear that I do not regard the dissolution of the Comintern as an act of wide-eyed benevolence or stargazing idealism on the part of Stalin and the Soviet leaders. I do not for a moment think they are giving away something for nothing. They need our aid immediately and they are willing to pay a price for it. They need our good will in the post-war world and will pay a price.

First, the Russians need a second front in Europe and they need it now. It will not do to say that we are going to invade Europe anyway. The timing of the invasion means a good deal to the Russians. And at the very moment the Comintern step was announced, a movement was being started in America to abandon the European war and to concentrate on Japan.

Second, the Russians need more Lend-Lease arms. And they need food badly, as their representatives at the Hot Springs food conference have stated in a strongly worded statement that has not received the attention it deserves.

Third, the Russians must help to strengthen the national unity and the will to resist on the part of the

subject peoples of the Continent, particularly on the eve of an Allied invasion. Stalin knows that the biggest single obstacle toward such unity and will is the fear of the Comintern. Those who say that the Comintern died anyway a long time ago forget that no one was invited to its funeral. The Nazi propagandists from Spain to the Ukraine, from Norway to the heel of Italy, and from Quebec to Buenos Aires have long been using it as a method of splitting anti-fascist unity.

That is why I think that Stalin means what he says. And that is why the dissolution step is a weapon in the war.

But how about the future? Why should not the Russian leaders revive the Comintern after the war? My answer must again run in terms of Russian national interest. Russia will want her pre-war frontiers recognized. And the Russian leaders will want us to keep our hands out of the internal affairs of the post-war countries in Eastern Europe. For the Russians stand to gain from fulfilment of the agrarian revolutions in Rumania, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, Hungary. And they would prefer the states between them and Germany to be (shall we say) Benes states rather than Sikorski states.

More important than anything else is the fact that the Russians will need help in the tasks of reconstruction. They will have suffered the deep scars of war, not only in millions of lives lost, but also in crops and machinery destroyed and the good earth ravaged. If the Vansittart plan for dismantling German industry goes through—and I trust it will not—Russia could use part of the machinery and equipment. If not, America will be the principal reliance for the means of reconstruction.

It is in these terms that I see the various moves today on the checkerboard of world politics. There can be little doubt that the Comintern step was taken at the request of Eden and Roosevelt, whether or not it is to be linked with the Davies mission. Unless I miss my guess, it is tied up both with our own negotiations with the Vatican and also with Russia's *rapprochement*. Whether this looks toward a Concert of Powers in post-war Europe, or toward a Balance of Power and a division into spheres of influence whereby Russia will agree to keep her hand out of France and Germany in return for being given a relatively free hand in Eastern Europe, still remains to be cleared up.

Either of these alternative arrangements is, of course, compatible with a United Nations structure in the post-war world. I take the Comintern step as a gesture of good will toward such an organization. Russia played her part with a wholehearted sincerity in the League of Nations, and I see no reason as yet for doubting that she will do the same in a United Nations set-up.

Those who challenge this will point to the mounting sense of nationalism in Russia. It was, of course, inevitable that the abandonment of the world revolutionary mission should be accompanied by a return to the deep strain of nationalism in the Russian tradition. I have a certain impatience with those who are stricken with grief and terror at the spectacle of the Russians reviving the memories of General Kutuzov. What else except the confluence of nationalist pride and socialist hope could possibly account for what would otherwise be the miracle of Sevastopol, of Stalingrad, of Leningrad, of the guerrilla fighters?

But a nationalism which marks a final break with the idea of world revolution is not the same as a nationalism which makes international coöperation impossible. In fact, the break with the world revolution is, whether or not we like it, the clearing away of an important obstacle that stood in the path of international action. Those Americans who are today fearful of the problem that Russian nationalism presents for our post-war world would, I have no doubt, have been even more fearful if they had a genuine revolutionary internationalism to deal with. To ask the workers of the world to unite and overthrow their capitalist governments makes sense if that is the way you feel about it. But it doesn't make sense in the mouths of those who at the same time are asking those very governments to unite and form a world federation.

Does that mean that I welcome the manifestations of the new Russian nationalism? It does not. I am uneasy about them, just as I am uneasy about the reactionary chauvinism that threatens to sweep post-war American opinion. Like America, Russia has isolationist impulses as well as internationalist impulses. Which set of impulses finally triumphs in each nation depends to a great extent on what the other nation does. The only difference is that, because of the divergent freedoms of expression in the two countries, isolationism and internationalism are expressed by two different groups here, whereas in Russia both impulses are combined within the mind and will of Stalin and his group, as within a split personality.

But I cannot end this phase of the discussion without expressing my conviction that because of three factors the Russians are more likely to be a healthy influence in a post-war world than most Americans like to believe. One reason is that the Russians have been fighting an anti-fascist war and have known it. And they have suffered in it. There is a strong chance that we may go through the rest of the war without being touched at the core of our conviction, and without being stretched by it to the bounds of our imagination.

The second reason is that, unlike America, Russia has largely solved her internal economic problem. She will not need foreign war adventures—as Hitler needed them or as a capitalist-imperialist America might in the future need them—to resolve her internal social an-

tagonisms. She will need peace to repair her ravaged energies and go on with her social tasks. And she will seek peace unless she once more feels, as she did in 1939, that the other nations mean war.

The third reason is that the Russians cannot fight a war as drastic as the one they are engaged in without being changed by it. We can as yet have little inkling of the character or extent of the change. But we can guess that the thoroughgoing organization of the war economy, the civilian resistance, the guerrilla warfare, could only be achieved in a war that had become democratic in its inner nature.

These are my reasons for refusing to get stampeded into a fright about post-war Russia and her place in the world. In fact, I am much more anxious about my own country and the role it will play—anxious as one can be anxious only about something one loves deeply. There can be little question—although the reasons don't belong in this article—that during the next decade the progressives in America will be fighting a rear-guard retreat action while they are trying once more to rebuild and consolidate their strength.

In this context the dissolution of the Comintern is not unimportant. It will not mean everything, but it may mean something. The original decision in 1919 to create the Comintern probably made good sense from the standpoint of the Russians. But it was a fatal decision from the standpoint of the Left in other countries. For what it did was to make the house of the Left a house perpetually divided against itself. It was like that classic house that you saw in Charlie Chaplin's "Gold Rush," with half of it on American soil and the other half teetering on the precipice of the unknown. One could never tell whether the allegiance of the Communists lay with the American promise, with the dream of world revolution, or with Russian policy.

But, one asks, will all this now be changed? There are many who wonder whether—even assuming the genuineness of intention of the Russian ruling group—the ruling groups of the national Communist Parties will change their line at all. If it is left to them to decide, I rather think they will not. There is an inertia that comes from long habituation to following someone else's lead. And there is the "iron law of oligarchy" which Michels has made famous, and which should give us pause before we think that a party ruling group can be dissolved by fiat.

But in the longer run I think that the Communist Party in America is through. It has been disowned by the Comintern and has lost its Russian support. It never had real American roots. It will linger on, may even try to assume a new face and form. But its inner meaning lies in another era, which has now been formally buried. It will have to yield now to the internal struggles for control, which have been hitherto suppressed by the Comintern. Its leadership can no longer func-

tion by reason of being the king's deputy. Forces of democratization will be felt from within. And from without, coming from the whole American social scene, there will be impulsions toward its dissolving itself and joining in unity with a new national political grouping.

Can such a new political alignment be formed and function and take power in America? I think it can. Malcolm Cowley wrote truly in last week's New Republic of "the end of the New Deal." Although I think President Roosevelt stands a better than even chance of being reelected in 1944 if the war is still on, even his reelection will not save the New Deal. For the fact is that the Democratic Party has become mainly the flaming prestige of a single name—and you cannot build progressive power in the future on a memory.

It follows that, even assuming another Roosevelt term, the next years must be spent in the hard work of organization, of education, of building the cadres for a new party in a new political realignment. But this cannot be done so long as the CIO is split between Communist unions and non-Communist unions, as long as the American Labor Party is split similarly, as long as the Newspaper Guild is split, as long as the energies of progressives are taken up with such unfruitful disputes as that which is now raging about "Mission to Moscow" and Warner Brothers. With the obstacle of the Communist dual allegiance removed, we can move on to matters which will better repay our energies. I am convinced that an even bigger obstruction to progressive unity than the Communists themselves has been the obsessive bitterness that they have left in the minds of their opponents as a mark of their encounter.

It would be an easy matter to think that all will be solved by building a new national progressive movement. It will not. It is in the very nature of a movement toward democratic humanism anywhere in the world today that it must become international before it can be effective nationally. We need a new internationalism—of labor, of scientific workers, or writers, of coöperatives, of planning groups. Progressivism has become indivisible. If the British progressives fail after the war, it will be a blow to us. If we fail, it will be a blow to them. If Germany or France or Italy fall under the rule of clerical reactionaries or become absorbed in the cartel system, which is truly the Capitalist Internationalist, then all of us will suffer a setback.

But the new progressive internationalism will be a federation of autonomous movements, and not an instrument of a single nation. It will have a chance to point the way toward strong national states which are democratic because they serve the needs of their functional groups, and toward a structure of world authority. And, at long last, people everywhere will have to face the real causes of revolution—hunger and poverty and insecurity and world anarchy—without blaming it on a Comintern ghost.

MAX LERNER

Are Grade Labels Red, Too?

THE PRESIDENT's and the consumer's "Hold-the-Line" policy have both been defeated. As expected, Prentiss Brown has dropped the grade-labeling program for canned foods. Brown's reason for cancellation—"the additional labor and expense involved in grade labeling would curtail production"—might just as well have attributed the cause to the position of the stars, for all the sense it makes. The reasons he did not mention reveal much more.

The first of these is that the congressional Paul Reveres are at it again. This time, in one of the most unusual marriages on record, grade labeling and controls on the production and consumption of newsprint paper are being investigated together.

From reading the remarks of the supporters of the newest in this year's marathon of House investigations, the record will go all out to call a spade a Red. Said Representative Halleck, sponsor of the resolution, "Grade labeling is the opening gun of as sinister a move as could well be figured by the bureaucrats, to despoil our economy for the benefit of the socialist system of production for use and not for profit. . . . This lurking evil must be resisted at all costs." And the congressional record of the discussion is replete with similar examples, including a sinister theme of ridicule and contempt which identifies the advocates of grade labeling as "long-haired crackpots," economists, and visionaries with "half-baked ideas."

There is some method in all this confused talk about how grade labeling will change our economy. By law, the OPA is prohibited from altering present business practices unless the change is necessary for effective price control. Therefore the congressional attack against the OPA's use of grade labeling is predicated on the fact that its adoption would constitute a reform for the sake of reforming, and is therefore illegal. While very clever, this argument is not relevant. The point at issue with respect to canned foods was not whether grade labeling has any merit as a guide to the consumer, but that fruits and vegetables are packed in opaque containers of tin. Their qualities cannot be seen until the can is opened. Since this happens in the home and not in the store, it is then too late to complain about price in relation to quality. Grade labeling is primarily, in wartime, a tool in price-ceiling enforcement. Stamping the grade on the label permits policing by the consumer at the time of purchase. Its use would stop in its tracks the current practice of selling low qualities at ceilings covering higher grades. If grade labeling were to be considered only on this basis of providing an effective new tool for the control of prices, the argument for it would be incontrovertible. So incontrovertible, that the House of Representa-

tives, particularly the Republicans, has avoided mentioning that grade labeling has any function at all in price enforcement. Instead, Representative Boren, chairman of the subcommittee called into being by the Halleck resolution, wrote Prentiss Brown asking him to hold up any new grade-labeling programs. Brown, ever obliging, threw out the grade labeling of canned foods.

To understand the grade-labeling fight you need to know the line-up. Who are the leaders of the opposition? The trademark boys. Libby and Del Monte are the perennial standouts, along with Gerber, of baby-food fame, and Heinz. So, too, are those canners who pack their products for large buyers and affix the brand label of the buyer instead of their own. The buyers, largely wholesalers, advertise these products as their own. White Rose, Monarch and Red and White are some of the better known private labels, but there are hundreds of others. These buyers exert great pressure on the canners against grade labeling and, through them, on the National Canners' Association, the organization which has for years led the fight to prevent grade labeling.

Both the trademarking canner and the private-label buyer are afraid of losing favored markets and price premiums to competition which will sell equal quality at lower prices. As long as all canned goods are not identified on the label by grade so that the consumer can make instant comparison of qualities, these groups are secure in their extra profits. Since they are the largest factors in the purchase of food advertising, they are dear to the hearts of magazines, especially of Hearst, publisher of Good Housekeeping, whose California ranches have been for many years large growers and packers. Supporting these canners, wholesalers and publishers are the Association of National Advertisers and the Associated Grocery Manufacturers of America. The membership of these organizations includes General Foods and many other manufacturers of cereals and other dry groceries who fear that if grading starts on canned goods it will not stop there.

But the stark truth is that, since time immemorial, all canned goods have been graded—and carefully. No wholesaler will buy from the canner until he knows the grade. Every canner, even of trademarked goods, right now grades his product as Fancy, Choice, Extra-Standard or Standard. So meticulous and well recognized is this grading that a canner's invoice with the grading shown is required by bankers when a wholesaler seeks to obtain loans on his warehouse stocks. Obviously all the outcry against grade labeling is simply directed against printing the quality grade on the label of each can where the consumer can read it.

No change in determining these grades has ever been contemplated by the OPA. The alphabetical terms, A, B and C, are interchangeable with Fancy, Choice and Extra-Standard, and could be designated on the labels as Grade A (fancy), Grade B (choice), Grade C (extra-standard). Sorry, no revolution inherent. With grade labeling, Grade A (fancy) will be the best and all Grade A's (fancy) will be comparable in quality and ought to be comparable in price. It is very simple and not at all like Libby's system, in which a black label tells the wholesaler that the fruit is fancy, a white label, choice, and a completely different brand name, "Rosedale," conceals the standard product.

There is a large segment of the food industry which is definitely in favor of grade labeling as a means of obtaining more business and larger profits. Just as there are wholesalers who buy their supplies of canned goods and specify that their own brand label be used in lieu of any grading information, so there are large distributors using their own labels who are decidedly for grading. Grand Union, American Stores and Kroger use grade labeling now, like it, and are constantly extending their grading. A & P offers fourteen varieties of vegetables and ten different fruits by grades. In fact, all the great food chains, with the exception of Safeway and First National, are using it. In the growing self-service operations of these stores it has boosted sales of their own labels tremendously. While impressive, these are not the only large food interests strongly in favor of grading canned foods. Sixty-three canners owning seventy-eight canning plants have formed the United States Inspected Foods Educational Service. These canners were organized by an ultra big-business advertising agency, Geyer, Cornell and Newell, in New York. The Geyer agency handles the Squibbs toothpaste, Kelvinator and Nash Automobile accounts, none subversive in congressional eyes. Yet not only is the Educational Service for grades on cans, but every canner in the organization pays to have his goods graded and packed under the supervision of the United States Department of Agriculture.

Powerful retailing interests want grade labeling too. On April 7, at a meeting in Washington, representatives of the National Retail Dry Goods Association, organization of the big department stores, and of the Mail Order Association of America, Sears and so on, voted to tell Byrnes, Brown and Nelson that they wanted each article labeled to disclose that it is in conformity with the grades of the price or rationing order.

Thus, though the record shows that far more dollar volume of business favors grade labeling than opposes it, the OPA's campaign for grading has been abandoned to satisfy the congressional outcry. The OPA's jitters when Congress looks in its direction are already historic. Prentiss Brown goes farther than Henderson on every issue, including this one: his motto seems to be

that the way to have no enemies is to be nice to Congress—no matter what it does to the country! That was his policy in relaxing the ban on pleasure driving, in purging the OPA of the Henderson wing, in delaying for thirty days the rayon-hosiery-grading order and in expressing doubt about the legality of the order which sets prices of canned grapefruit juice by grades. Apparently the only thing that can force constructive action out of Brown is a catastrophe. Having run out of gasoline, he has reinstated the ban on pleasure driving, but only after Ickes had forced his hand.

As a nod in the direction of the consumer, Brown, in throwing out grade labeling, has now decided that grade information must be included on the retailer's invoice and given orally on request by the retailer to you when you buy. That for you, from your price administrator already deluged by complaints from consumers who have received short shrift and shorter quality at the hands of harassed retailers. Underlying Brown's fuzziness is a tremendous danger. When Brown sidesteps the grade-labeling issue by saying that he doubts the legality of his previous order, he opens the way to throwing out whatever program there is now and any future hope for pricing in relation to quality. The President's Hold the Line order on the price front becomes as meaningless in the price administrator's eyes as a petition signed by Consumers' Union, Colston Warne and his professors.

This is one danger which labor didn't have to be told about. Perhaps Don Montgomery's forced resignation as consumers' counsel to the Department of Agriculture was not an unmixed evil. He is in there pitching on this issue for the CIO—and the railroad unions and the AFL have also been active. That's the most encouraging factor on the home front. The outcry and sharp protests of almost all the women's organizations were added to labor's strength in an unparalleled demonstration. And it will make a decisive difference. Hearst and the canners have won their war on grade labeling and, with it, they may also win that other curious mate in the Halleck investigation wedding, the relaxation of all controls on newsprint—still, next year the story will be different. Too many outside forces recognize the merit, the reasonableness and the need for integrated price and quality control for a weak price administrator and a Congress responsive to selfish interests to stem this tide. That is, provided all the forces that want it will untiringly keep their vigilance and their chins up. If they do that, grade labeling may still be a reality in 1943. Then we'll be in the same advanced state as Canada, where most of the American canners, who so bitterly protest grading in the United States, sell their trademarked brands with grades shown. Up to this writing they seem to be doing all right, and not even Dies has called Canada a communist state.

ELMER LAND

Ships Come First

OUR VICTORY waits for the time when we can transport overseas the armed forces and the supplies required to win it. The next step in our strategy just decided in the Roosevelt-Churchill conferences has been determined largely on the basis of Allied shipping capacity. And the final answer to the agitation of the new "Japs-First" bloc, reported in last week's New Republic, is also provided by the situation in shipping.

Even Chief Jap Firster Sen. "Happy" Chandler must know that shipping is far from being the least of our troublesome bottlenecks. He must know, for instance, that although at the latest public report we are completing five new merchant ships a day, far ahead of our losses of the moment, our estimated tasks for 1943 and 1944, to move 1,800,000 men overseas this year and 2,000,000 next year, together with an initial eight tons of equipment per man plus one ton per man every month he stays overseas, will require the maximum utilization of our merchant tonnage. He must know that in spite of carefully laid European supply lines, our shipping outlook is extremely tight, and that the acceptance of his all-out "Japs-First" policy would mean that shipping requirements would double or triple, a clearly impossible proposal. Second-front action in Europe this year and the increased Pacific actions scheduled will demand the utmost in the mobilization of the full resources of our shipping industry.

Our ship-construction program is moving ahead; protection for shipping enroute overseas is undergoing improvement all the time; but really efficient utilization of available shipping has not yet been seriously attempted, if we are to judge by the results. Punctual delivery of goods in sufficient quantities is still more theory than fact. The administrative machinery required for the kind of tight control which alone will guarantee full and complete participation by industry in our shipping program is still wanting.

The War Shipping Administration was established in February, 1942, with full powers granted in its executive order to control all merchant shipping. Now, more than fifteen months later, there is still no over-all plan for the use of our ships. To be sure, what has been accomplished without a plan is truly remarkable. We have already moved two and a half times as many men abroad as were moved in the last war, and this whole number was completely supplied from this end, as compared with a 40-percent supplying from the overseas end in the last war. We have transported six times as much cargo as in the last war, and our ships have traveled twice as far to carry it. Each ship holds approximately the amount of freight carried by two freight trains of one hundred cars. But even this great per-

formance is far from adequate. As Admiral Land has warned: "Wartime ship operations are inherently inefficient. . . . Convoy alone makes that a fact. . . . Even a casual study of the global geography of this war, and a look at some of the ports we are required to use show why operating efficiency, turn-around, loading and other necessary operations are extremely difficult."

Confusing something tough with something impossible has always been considered un-American. I hope we stick to this idea, especially in view of the kind of warning many informed officials have voiced on shipping prospects, pointing out that the situation would probably get worse before it got better, that timeworn shipping practices customary to the industry must give way to streamlining, regardless of the interests of the industry.

In February, the Maritime Unions of the CIO submitted a detailed plan for increasing our shipping efficiency. In a fat document, the unions forcefully presented their ideas as to how every single ton of American ship capacity could be made to count most effectively against the Axis. The points they made were well known to everyone concerned with shipping. But most of the specific proposals either had not been thought of or had not been seriously considered before. Although a Truman Committee report on shipbuilding and shipping has been issued since the CIO Maritime Union's report, the latter remains the most constructive shipping plan yet offered.

The CIO shipping plan estimates that a 25-percent increase in cargo delivery could be effected by putting their recommendations into action. Such a suggestion deserves the most serious consideration. The unions say that although the War Shipping Administration accepted delivery of their plan, acknowledged it, and even put some of the recommendations into effect on paper, there is practically no tangible evidence that the major faults have been corrected.

The CIO plan called for improvements in:

Allocation of Space and Cargo Assembly.—Every recommendation is predicated upon full control of merchant shipping by a single civilian agency, the War Shipping Administration, and the return to the WSA of ships now run by the army, the navy and other agencies. The plan also calls for full WSA control, contrary to present practice, of assembly of cargo, including docks, terminals and warehouses. The theoretical goal of maximum use of shipping space calls for assembling a full cargo for a specific vessel at one point, together with sufficient labor and equipment to load it on departure and unload it on arrival. The fact that the army, the navy and Lend-Lease have their own

cargo assembly depots, as well as the WSA, means that ships often have to move from pier to pier in a given port to load, each move wasting from twelve to twenty-four hours, with five or six separate stop-overs a not unusual feature in certain Eastern ports.

As regards space allocation, the War Shipping Administration has full authority on paper, but in reality the army, the navy, Lend-Lease and some other agencies fight for jurisdiction over ship allocation. The unions cite this example: "A vessel under direction of the army completed its outbound voyage, docking at a port in Nigeria. In the same port where the vessel was discharged, the docks were stacked with crude rubber awaiting shipment to the United States. Because the vessel was under the direction of the army and no instructions were issued to pick up return cargo, the ship left without the rubber, sailed down the Gold Coast, took on ballast and returned to the United States."

Longshore Operations and Labor Supply.—The "shape-up" system in New York Harbor still stands in the way of full use of available longshoremen at any given time. Coördination of transportation, warehousing and loading is still lacking to the degree required for bringing cargo into the best possible position for straightaway loading.

Manning and Operation.—The WSA's biggest manning job lies in recruiting experienced former seamen for the scores of skilled jobs now vacant and requiring immediate filling. In the next three months we are going to need 20 percent more men than we now have in the merchant marine, mostly engineers, mates or other licensed seamen. Current training programs can supply perhaps three-fourths of the required number, mostly in the unlicensed ranks. To fill this gap successfully we should get older men back into the service, and should institute a vigorous upgrading program with full coöperation from the unions. Such mistakes as the advertising campaign of last September, which called for experienced seamen and netted several thousand replies, only to reject them all after it became clear that training-school graduates could fill the vacancies, cannot be allowed to recur if the WSA's appeals are to be taken seriously by old salts.

In recent months ships have not been able to sail from American ports because of shortages in manpower. These delays meant waits in getting vital supplies to men in our front lines, and they will continue until private pools of seamen are broken up, until hoarding is abolished, until army and navy vessels taken from the merchant pool are put under the control of the WSA and coördinated with all other operations.

Loading and Unloading in Foreign Ports.—Unlike the Truman Committee, the CIO maritime unions in their report admit the practical difficulty of effecting

much improvement in foreign-port shipping operations. Ballast pools can be organized to do away with the supposed necessity of carrying thousands of pounds of sandbags from American ports to ship destinations and back again. Unloading and loading at foreign ports can be better organized by installing adequate machinery and sending out skilled longshoremen from this country to direct operations. But practical difficulties will still outweigh these possibilities in most cases; the maritime unions therefore urge primary attention to the home situation in which improvements can more easily be put into effect.

The shipping-business-as-usual outlook still prevails in the War Shipping Administration. Deputy Administrator Lewis Douglas, who began as an influence for efficiency in the WSA, has apparently been frozen out of active service by Admiral Land. The slow improvements that would come about in the most conservative export or import forms are occurring in the administration of our war shipping program. But nothing more. Imagination, initiative, boldness—they are all lacking. Bananas, bauxite and Chilean nitrates are still taking up more shipping space into this country than is necessary—unless you consider bauxite for the Mellons to use in making their monopoly brand of aluminum essential to our survival. Shipping-industry men, prevented by the very fact of their past experience from adopting a free approach to the new demands of a war shipping program, make up almost 100 percent of the WSA's personnel. Labor's voice is almost unheard around the WSA, in spite of the CIO program. Labor-management committees are just something the WPB dreamed up in a nightmare, as far as practical WSA application is concerned. Some of the most flagrant errors in war shipping practices of last year have been corrected this year. Supposedly, the conditions which created pile-ups in Indian Ocean and Red Sea ports have been eliminated; coming offensives alone will provide the test.

In the face of the WSA's failure to do more than hold the line in the provision of merchant shipping, it is well to remember the prediction made by William Y. Elliott, chief of the WPB Stockpile and Shipping Branch, some months ago: "The shipping picture . . . gives no prospect of any great improvement. In fact, it may deteriorate very rapidly, when and if a second front requires an even greater diversion of shipping to the actual theatre of war and the most rapid turn-around of vessels involved. . . . The need for shipping will certainly grow and will, I think, more than offset any gains accomplished by the tremendous speeding up of shipbuilding within the last year." Our answer to enemy submarine action must be the utmost efficiency in the use of our merchant marine to deliver the goods to our armed forces in sufficient quantities and on time.

Washington

HELEN FULLER

Nothing Rotten in Denmark

THE NAZIS IN DENMARK have striven to make the country a show window for the beauties of the Greater Germany. There they have been at their gentlest and most ingratiating; there they announced, in their most naïve manner, that they were going to make themselves "systematically loved." And there they have achieved their most shattering failure.

Denmark did not resist the invasion of the Nazi hordes, because physically she could not. Most literate and educated of countries, she had none of the tools of war. She was obliged to trust the German non-aggression pledge of 1939. The world has assumed that Denmark has not been resisting since the occupation on April 9, 1940, but the world has been wrong.

Danish opposition first went through a stage of bitter, chilly sarcasm which infuriated the Nazis but left them helpless to retaliate. Recently it has flared into open sabotage and denunciation.

Shortly after the occupation a newsdealer put up a poster advertising a pamphlet on how to speak English: "Learn English before our friends the English arrive." Sharply rebuked for that, he changed it to: "Learn German before our friends the Germans leave."

In the office of Copenhagen's biggest newspaper, Nazis are annoyed by a large framed picture of Churchill. But they can do nothing about it because it was taken from an illustrated Berlin magazine and bears the caption: "Churchill's hopeless expression on learning of the fall of France." "Hopeless as Churchill" has become a Danish byword.

The Danes call the green-clad Nazis "grasshoppers." So it was peculiarly apt when they chose one of Hans Christian Andersen's stories and started to put it on the stage of the Royal Opera House. It was a story of little green insects, like lice, which could never understand why they were so unpopular. This, however, the Nazis banned; but by the very act of banning, they publicly admitted that they recognized the application of the fable, and all Denmark rocked with laughter.

When Nazis went to King Christian and demanded that Denmark institute anti-Jewish laws, the wise old King replied, "But you see, we have no Jewish problem here. We do not consider ourselves inferior to them." The implication left the Nazis angry but helpless. He then attended services in a synagogue, in full court regalia.

Around the beloved figure of their King the Danes have rallied all that they love. Before his recent accident, this remarkable monarch, thirty years on the throne, seventy-two years old and a blood donor, rode daily through the Copenhagen streets, alone, and frequently received from the people so many bouquets that he had to ask boys on bicycles to accompany him

as porters. He always stopped for red traffic lights, and waited among his people. Recently, seeing the throng about him with hats off, he said drily to them:

"Put on your hats, friends. It will be some time before we get the green light."

When Hitler telegraphed the King a lengthy birthday greeting, Christian took the Nazis' breath away by the curtness of his wired reply: "Thank you."

The Nazi Gestapo chief in Denmark, Werner Best (whose work the Danes refer to as "Bestial"), demanded that the government deliver its ten torpedo boats, a large part of the Danish navy. Reminded of their promise that the navy should remain intact in Danish hands, the Nazis protested that they had been misunderstood; they only wanted to hire the ships.

"The Danish navy is not for hire," retorted the King gravely.

"Then we shall take it anyway. Prepare those ships for surrender to us," demanded the Germans.

The Danes dismantled the ships, taking all guns and equipment ashore to a storehouse. Thereupon the storehouse burned to the ground. The Nazis ordered the press not to mention the torpedo boats; so the King commanded all Danish flags to fly at half-mast, and shook hands with the 800 crew members.

When the Germans announced a scrap drive, Denmark blossomed out with signs, "Hide your scrap." Whenever British airmen have come down in Denmark and been captured, they have been deluged with flowers and gifts. Danes begged the RAF to bomb the great Burmeister and Wain shipyards, makers of the world's largest Diesels and of 40 percent of marine motors. When the RAF did, Denmark openly rejoiced.

"Rejoicing by those who waved to British airmen who bombed Copenhagen, and by those who smothered the graves of two airmen with flowers, might be subdued if the government were to publish the cost of the damage," darkly lamented a German newspaper. "People are showing a special interest in burning our factories; not one day passes without fires of essential stocks or factories. A special corps of guards is necessary; otherwise the workers, themselves saboteurs, may keep guard, which is like having the fox guard the geese."

Night skies glow every night with fires, which were rare in peacetime Denmark. Explosions damage rail lines, piers and bridges. A locomotive is derailed outside the shed, locking in four others. Metal shavings appear in butter going to Germany; fish shipped there are decayed.

For a while the Germans pretended that there was no sabotage in Denmark. It was forbidden to print news of it. Now acts of sabotage are so numerous that

the Germans have authorized the press to report minor incidents with a warning to the Danish people. Major destruction is not reported—for example, when inside action aided by British bombs put the largest Danish shipyard out of commission for six months or more.

There is constant traffic between England and Denmark. Danes escape via Sweden, and, aided by the RAF, come back by parachute, traveling freely over Denmark, sheltered and helped by all Danes. The Nazis repeatedly offer large cash awards for delivery of anti-German Danes, but so far not one has been taken up. Five thousand Danish seamen are sailing 800,000 tons of Danish shipping for the United Nations.

"We marvel that the Danes expect everything good from England, and everything evil from Germany," bemoaned a typically naïve German newspaper. Simultaneously the Germans suppress such novels as "For Whom the Bell Tolls," "The Moon Is Down," "This Above All" and "The Keys of the Kingdom"; of course the underground circulates them anyway.

Twenty-four underground newspapers flourish, one with a circulation of 50,000. If the staff should be arrested tonight, a new staff would get it out tomorrow.

A prime reason for the apparent Nazi restraint is that they are taking what they want anyway, and to practise open violence would only make life more uncomfortable without any substantial gain. The Nazis have taken half the superb Danish cattle herds, three-fourths of the pigs, five-sixths of the poultry, the output of cement and the use of the shipyards.

True, they "pay" for this with German occupation marks, which have no other use; and they back up the marks by taking the cash from the Danish National Bank. They demanded 150,000 workmen for German factories, promising that Danish workers would have the same status as Germans, in contrast to workers from other countries. But so far the Germans have managed to lay hands on only 35,000 Danes.

After three years of the blessings and beguilements of the Nazis, Denmark actually had a free popular election. "This shows how tolerant and generous we are," said their captors, giving them only ten days' notice. The vote stunned the Germans; it was the biggest election ever held in Denmark, more than 2,000,000 votes were cast. This vote represented 90 percent of the electorate, about 55 percent of the population. The Nazi Party received less than two percent.

In the United States, the popular Danish Minister, Henrik de Kauffmann, cut all ties with Copenhagen, negotiated the treaty which places Greenland under American protection (to the great rejoicing of all Denmark) and keeps up payments on Danish bonds held here. The Danes have never understood the regular chorus of excitement every time Finland paid her interest to the United States before the war; Denmark has always paid all obligations as a matter of course.

"Our peace aims," said Dr. de Kauffmann recently, "are simple. We have no territorial claims, in fact, no other claim but the claim for liberty."

C. H. W. HASSELRIIS

Soldiers' Prose¹

The First Bullet

BEHIND THE CAPTAIN, his men are waiting. Someone tries a wisecrack; it trails off. Another man laughs, making a strange sound pitched precariously high. The others stand tense and quiet, hands viselike around rifles. In a moment they will start over the top, facing enemy fire for the first time.

The silence is torn by a shriek and hysterical laughter. The captain peers angrily into the dark; a sergeant investigates.

Private Jones has thrown his rifle to the ground. He is laughing, but tears wet his cheeks. It's no use trying to quiet him. Something in him has snapped. He's battle-crazy before he has faced a bullet. Don't condemn him. Thousands like him in the last war, facing guns from the business end for the first time, cracked in the same way.

¹ This is one of a series of articles and sketches submitted in our Soldiers' Prose competition. These are paid for at our regular rates and there is also a special prize for the best entry submitted during each calendar month. — THE EDITORS

Uncle Sam's new army is trained for the zero hour and the problem of the first bullet much more thoroughly this time.

At Camp M—, Texas, where they're turning out tank destroyers, those in command started the training by setting up a couple of machine guns on mounds of earth at the top of a gently sloping hill, pointing them to deliver a cross-fire about thirty inches above the ground. Then they turned some men loose a hundred yards away and told them to get up to those guns. The trick was to keep *down*! Bullets flying thirty inches above the ground are a scant eighteen inches over your head, your rump and your heels.

Delighted by the first of these tests, officials went to town with the course. They dug trenches with parapets across the field. They laid mines in carefully placed shell holes. They strung barbed-wire entanglements. And they placed small dynamite charges, electrically controlled from a tower at one end, to be set off behind the men who tarried in their advance up the field.

Today it's as much like a real battlefield as you can get without actually having men shooting to kill.

When it's your turn to go over the course, you line up with about twenty other men at the far end of the field, and wait anxiously for the signal. You know it's not too dangerous, and you know that the eighteen inches those bullets are staying away from your head are a mile miss, if you're careful. But yet you can't help remembering the fellow whose thigh was creased just yesterday, and you keep thinking of those lurid stories the old-timers (with eight months' army experience) have been flinging; of heads blown off and legs severed—all untrue.

You force yourself to look around at the others. There's the white-faced kid staring straight ahead, scared but determined. He'll do all right. There's a group wisecracking about pulling the others through if they faint on the field. Whistling in the dark it is, but good psychology. There are two serious buddies, looking over the terrain, spotting the mine traps, picking the best way to go, working out a scheme to get through together. The rest are mostly good, plain American soldiers, scared but facing up to it.

And, of course, there are the neurotics—the high-keyed, high-pitched, emotionally taut. These are the question marks. Will they get through or will they stop halfway up the field? Men have fainted out there, passed out cold from terror. Others have got just so far under the curtain of bullets when their wills have ceased to function, and, like possums, they have shut their eyes tight and lain there supine. Still others have reached the barbed-wire entanglements, then fearful of raising their hands to free their clothing from the barbs as they inch along on their backs, they have broken down and cried in sheer desperation. But these are the exceptions, and they occur infrequently.

At last the signal. You leap through fifteen yards of brush and make a dive for the first trench.

Bursts from the machine guns tell you to advance. You crawl from the trench, hugging the dirt, placing your hands and arms straight out over your head, then sliding your body along by pulling up with your arms and helping with a push from your bent leg.

Someone is too slow. The towerman detonates a charge a few yards in the rear. The effect on the laggards is amazing.

You come to a shell hole, and warily circumvent it, taking no chances with the pound mine down there.

Boom! A charge goes off on your right. Instinctively your head burrows into your helmet, your body rigid. Dirt and stones patter on your helmet.

You've traveled about twenty yards from the trench now, and you come to the barbed wire. Over onto your back, grab the first strands, hold them up while you get your body in and under. Pick up a few more strands, inch a bit more. One barb catches your pants leg. You try to free it. It won't come loose. You reach down cautiously and work it back and forth. No luck. A spurt of bullets, and you look up and see the inter-

persed tracers streaking awfully close. To hell with it. With a lunge that rips your pants from thigh to ankle, you come free, and worry your way along. The steel helmet is canted back on your head and makes an ideal sliding device. Later you'll notice you've worn a smooth, shiny bald spot in the paint at the crown.

At last the interminable ten yards of wire ends, and over onto your belly you go. The sweat is pouring down, welling over the sweatband of your fiber-helmet liner. Your breath comes in gasps, and you cough from the smoke of the dynamite charges. The muscles in your upper arms and chest are horribly weary.

You pause a moment and try to control your breathing. Dynamite blasts three yards behind you, bullets spit inches over your head, but you keep on resting. Head down, secure under the broad helmet, body close to the ground, arms out flat, you're gaining an assurance, a confidence and a respectful disdain for the blasts and booms and concussions. You're learning not to be afraid.

The machine guns stutter away, but you've forgotten the bullets and are concentrating on the next trench and the next entanglement.

Into the trench you roll with an almost professional ease and out you crawl, fast. You've been warned of dynamite blasts in the trench if you linger.

Under the second entanglement, this time working with a buddy you've caught up to. You go first, pause, hold the wires for him. He passes you, stops, holds for you. You're through in jig time, and there's another trick to be remembered another time and another place.

You roll into the last ditch, the safety trench where everyone must wait until the firing is over and all are through the course. Somebody is panting, almost sobbing, in an entanglement two yards from the ditch. A soldier crawls out from the ditch to the man there, holds the wire up, frees him. The two are back in a few seconds, bullets flicking overhead, noiseless, because you're so close to the guns. You have to be 300 yards away before you hear the whistle as they cut the air.

The man who was entangled lies in the mud face down, motionless. You glance at the rescuer, a man you have never liked, with a new understanding.

There's the whistle to come out. Your whole group has gotten through, no injuries, no delays, no one quitting. You run noisily up to the next group who have been watching you apprehensively. You clap each other on the back and yell from sheer relief at having come through something which had terrified you, and which you had found to be not so bad after all. And like the big-shots that you are, you generously give unwanted advice to the next group.

You look around now at your own group, and you smile as you see every mother's son hopping around like a kid with his first present. There'll be no shattered nerves or zero-hour madness in that group when the big test comes.

CPL. MELVIN FAUER

Washington Notes

Good and Bad News

MR. ROOSEVELT has set up a new super-duper agency. A twenty-one-year-old sailor, has wandered in and out of the congressional gallery, delivering the best speech of the session. The country finally faces the real tax issue, which will decide whether or not we check inflation. That, and the perennial dither over politics, comprise certain recent elements of the Washington scene. Let me take them up one by one.

The point about the new Office of War Mobilization is that Mr. Roosevelt has finally persuaded himself to delegate some of his authority. Hanging on to all authority in sight is Mr. Roosevelt's great administrative weakness. The man picked—suave, gregarious, energetic, competent Jimmie Byrnes—is neither a liberal nor a conservative. He is a sort of human ball-bearing, who carries the maximum weight with the minimum of friction. He is master of the art of getting things done without giving offense. For the moment he is the ideal man, ideal both because of his own attainments and because Mr. Roosevelt has got somebody he trusts. One danger in the situation, to be brutal about it, is some future personal jealousy between Byrnes and Harry Hopkins, Mr. Roosevelt's alter ego. It would be too bad if this developed and, with good will, it should be avoided.

The OWM announcement came hard on the heels of the Roosevelt-Churchill joint press conference. That was a never-to-be-forgotten affair; the two figures side by side who symbolize world democracy. Churchill's pudgy, infantile face, with baby-pink complexion and a big black cigar stuck right in the middle of it, is a caricaturist's dream. There is just enough silky fuzz on the top of his head, temples and eyebrows, to catch the afternoon White House sun, and give a sort of aura to his features. His character, of course, shows in his deep little eyes and big jaw; and in his voice when he starts to speak. The House of Commons touch is all over him, even to the affectation of the half-stutter which sets off his elevated, literary style, and gives a sort of theme-signature to everything he says. Mr. Churchill did not say much of importance to the press, either on or off the record. The important thing was that he was there. His intimacy with Roosevelt was evident in a dozen ways. The unaffected, mutual liking of these two optimists, whose hopes never seemed to be higher, is one of the sources of strength at a time like this.

In the same cheerful mood I must mention another incident, small in itself, but of far-reaching implications. Last week a sailor got tired of listening to the silly House poll-tax debate, and said a few words on his own from the gallery. He thus takes his place, in Washington folklore, beside the midget who sat in the elder Morgan's lap at the Pecora hearing. Evan O. Jones, signalman second-class, S.S. Los Angeles, back from two years' service at Singapore and way stations, on forty-eight hours' leave, chanced into the House, got interested in the debate, climbed over the rail onto the ledge of the gallery, and calmly addressed

the chamber. His remarks were succinct. Why, he asked, if a man can fight without paying a tax, can't he vote on the same basis? That was all. Nobody could answer him. Mr. Jones, I shall always like to think, was simple and sincere. His final public remark, as they led him from the gallery, was, "Mr. Speaker, haven't I got the floor?" Later on, he expressed dissatisfaction to the press at finding the House "still fighting the Civil War." Poor Mr. Jones! Before being sent back to his ship he suffered the inevitable penalty of asking rational questions in the House: he had his head examined.

Methinks I see a portent in all this. For the next forty years, I believe, we shall watch the armed forces of World War II making their voice heard from the gallery. Not always, I fear, on the side of the angels.

There will be no Sailor Jones present when House leaders take up shortly the single most important issue of the domestic front, Mr. Roosevelt's request for \$16,000,000,000 of more taxes. After wasting five months on the Ruml plan, they now face the real issue. We can't blink the fact, inflation is here. Advancing prices, black markets, strikes, are inevitable concomitants. Congress would like to dodge more taxes. The basic need for them, to help sluice off excess purchasing power, is obvious. What will the decision be? Liberals might as well recognize now that more taxes mean consumption taxes, of one sort or another. Australia, Canada, Britain are now all paying half, or more, of the cost of war from taxes; America only one-third. The need for taxes is evident, the facts are inexorable.

That leaves a paragraph for the political situation. A great journalistic hue and cry is going up over the possibility of a split in the Solid South, stemming, I believe, from an anti-New Deal piece in the *Satevepost*, by Gov. Sam Jones of Louisiana. Dozens of correspondents have been dispatched southward by hopeful Republican journals, and they are now making their lugubrious report: the South, they say, is going to *stay* solid and Democratic. The split is mostly a myth.

It seems odd to me that so little attention is being paid to a very real political split, however, that is evident here everyday. There is inner turmoil in the Republican ranks, indicated in every major international question that arises. Republican isolationists are on edge, getting jumpier with every sign that Willkie, Stassen, or some other candidate who objects to a Third World War, will get nominated.

Will the Republican isolationists bolt? My guess is they won't, any more than will the Solid South. The split is there, wide open; but obviously The Chicago Tribune, faced with the awful alternative of choosing between Roosevelt and Willkie, is not going to start a third party, because that would elect Roosevelt in any case. No, the "Issies" will swing even to Willkie, if he is the Republican nominee—and then knife him, of course, if he is elected.

If the war continues Roosevelt will probably be re-elected; if it doesn't, probably some Republican. Leading Republican contender right now is Willkie. It is a safe bet that the isolationists are going to be on the Republican bandwagon no matter who the candidate. Even if Mr. Willkie wins I am rather afraid his unwelcome allies will hamstring the peace for him.

Washington

T. R. B.

The Trouble with Movies: II

MUCH THAT IS WRONG with the movies can be blamed on what I call the terrain—the cashier in her glass house, the difficulty of reaching one's seat, the location of the men's room, the poor quality of the candy—if something isn't done about removing such obstacles between you and the movie, television is going to be brought back.

The management gives you no satisfaction all along the line. You are made to look like a fool before you're even inside. I don't think you are supposed to know what time the feature goes on; they make it so hard. The cashier, who doubles in Information, never hears your question because she is cut off from the world on all sides by glass, and either you are forced into sign language or that right-angled stance that goes with talking up through the ticket slot. Meanwhile the attendant is prodding you—"Move along; have your money ready," and blotting out whatever the cashier feels up to telling you. This, however, is preferable to asking the attendant himself, because he knows you are going to wait a long time, and, insufferable character, he enjoys this. The theatres are showing so many movies, featurettes and trumpet players these days that it's impossible for anyone to know what is on at a particular hour—I hope you are not foolish enough to believe the newspapers. The ticket-taker has recently become another obstacle. He no longer holds out his hand for your ticket, making your passes at him seem forward.

Who builds movie theatres? If you seek the men's room you vanish practically away from this world, always in a downward direction. It is conceivable that the men's room is on its way out. At the theatre called the Rialto in New York the men's room is so far down it somehow connects with the subway: I heard a little boy, who came dashing up to his father, say, "Daddy! I saw the subway!" The father went down to see for himself. Another place that lets patrons slip through its fingers is the theatre in Greenwich Village where the men's room is outside altogether.

Then, in the gold-leafed Carlsbad Caverns type of theatre there are the stairways, sweeping up and around and down and under, and since there are no signs telling you where to go I advise you not to stir a step until you can get hold of the manager. Something should be mentioned about managers, but aside from the one who said he personally would get me a seat in the center and sent me three separate times to the left wall, I am willing not to say it. Speaking of the left wall: do they think you can see from it? You find yourself looking so far to the side you are apt to be watching your neighbor instead of the picture, and is he a sight.

What is wrong with the candy? It comes in little boxes for five cents, and there are five kinds of it. They are all the same—gum drops; this includes the caramels. I have never seen these pebblelike candies sold anywhere except in movie theatres, where there is nothing to talk back to but the machine. The distinguishing feature of these candies is that they neither chew up nor melt away but remain in your mouth long after their function is over.

It used to be, but is now no longer, a courtesy to stand up when a person wanted to get to his seat. I don't know how else you are expected to get in. The average hurdle course of spectators' knees is well nigh impregnable. "Lady,

I can't get by, you don't give me enough room," is usually answered by sotto-voce imprecations out of which one phrase, something like "You're pinching my flesh, damn you," is audible. And so you go, pinching, shoving, stumbling or actually falling, as the case may be. The unsportsmanlike attitude of everyone concerned in this is absolute. You must take care not to curse back, because they will pass the word along the line to stiffen up. I have found out that if the first person arises, all accordingly rise—otherwise, they all stay put. Therefore I suggest that before you enter the row you say politely, "Pardon me?" and wait—on no account go forward before the first person has had time to show his colors.

If it is winter, everybody is holding his overcoat, which warns you that soon you will be getting out of your own. If you try to do this quietly and with no hysteria, you soon find yourself in danger of strangulation, and in the end you will have to stand up anyway, having cut off the circulation and nearly throttled yourself. (Note: It is impossible to get out of your coat while you are sitting on it.)

There is an increasing tendency among women to keep their hats on, arm-rest hogs have become more vicious and the people who plant their knees against the back of your chair to make it rock are riding you for a fall.

It sometimes seems to me that movie-goers do not understand very well, and have, at the same time, a brotherly urge to help one another out by explaining what is happening on the screen. With those of you who do not understand I would like to have a word. The person in front of you is practically a nervous wreck now from having gone through the movie terrain. Every word you speak, no matter how small, how friendly, how inconsequential and of interest to no one but yourself, may be just the thing to make that person crack. So I will repeat what I have often said in the past: "Quiet, please! Shhh!"

MANNY FARBER

The Bandwagon

... He [the American soldier] is not mentally tough or sufficiently determined; part of his heart is in it, but only part. These are the considered judgments of an experienced observer [Hanson Baldwin of The New York Times] and they are disturbing. ... If the men in the ranks of the elite divisions are deficient in fighting spirit, what are we to expect of the men in divisions without a fighting tradition? ... Mr. Baldwin suggests that this time [as opposed to 1917] determination and fortitude are lacking. If so, why? The softening effect of years of New Deal pampering, with all the encouragement it has given to self-pity, may provide part of the explanation. — *From an editorial in The Chicago Tribune.*

You may be sure that tomorrow—out of an even more glorious France—will come an even greater Pinaud. Toiletries for men and women that speak of the France that was ... packaged in the splendor of France victorious. — *From an advertisement in Pour La Victoire.*

The Opium of the People

Only those permitted to labor industriously and who know how to abound in honest poverty can be free, contented and

secure. Poverty is a bulwark of liberty, a guarantee of tranquility of spirit and a safeguard from danger. — *Walter H. Drame, in The Dallas Morning News.*

Oh, Yeah?

The reason that most husbands and wives fight is just to put a little variety and pep into domesticity. Otherwise they wouldn't do it. — *From Dorothy Dix's syndicated column printed in The Norfolk Virginian-Pilot.*

Total-War Department

Booth Tarkington's dog Figaro is an honorary general in the Wags today. . . . Mayor Robert Tyndall, a former army officer, presented the commission to Figaro in the Tarkington living room. — *UP dispatch from Indianapolis.*

Our readers are invited to contribute to this column; \$1 will be paid for each item used. Address: Bandwagon, care of The New Republic. Please enclose the original clipping. — THE EDITORS

Correspondence

The Catholic Issue

SIR: Catholicity and fascism are identical. That has been the persistent cry of many liberals ever since Pearl Harbor, and even before. The letter of Professor Lawrence M. Beals [The New Republic, May 24] is the latest diatribe. We Catholics may be fighting and dying in the foxholes, in the skies, or under the sea, in defense of our country. We may be sweating on the home front to increase production or to intensify morale. Nevertheless, we are a suspect lot, because we stubbornly adhere to an alleged crafty, scheming and seditious organization called the Catholic Church.

What do you liberals want of us? What do you propose to do about twenty-odd million citizens in this country? Evidently our patriotic sacrifices are not enough. What *will* satisfy you? Do you want us to abandon our faith? We shall never do that—we think it better to please God than to please men. Or do you want us to pick up our belongings and move out of the country? This land is ours, as much as it is yours. Or do you suggest that we ought to do away with ourselves? We do not fancy either individual or race suicide, however widespread these practices may be in the era of optimistic liberalism.

You liberals have a serious problem on your hands. Have the courage and intelligence to face it. Tell us in clear and simple terms what you are after.

FRANCIS E. MCMAHON

Notre Dame University, Notre Dame, Ind.

[Comment on Dr. McMahon's letter appears in the editorial section of this issue. — THE EDITORS]

The Melancholy Muse

SIR: With a delight shared, I suspect, by most of your subscribers, I have read in your correspondence columns the recent letter of Stanton A. Coblenz expressing the indignation felt by a "long-suffering public" outraged at the eccentricities continuously palmed off on it as "verse" or—Heaven save the mark!—as "poetry" by present-day periodicals. As a late contemporary of the genuine American poets, I never cease to marvel at the mentality that accepts and tacitly tolerates the monotonously inept productions of their pseudo-successors. . . .
Longmeadow, Mass.

F. WHITMORE

SIR: Only once in a long while am I so moved by a poem in your pages that I want to dash off an ecstatic letter about it. That's how I felt after reading Vincent McHugh's "How to Make a Poem," in your April 12 issue. You may imagine, then, what a start it gave me to pick up your May 10 issue and find Stanton A. Coblenz, himself a poet, almost at wits' end for words strong enough to describe how bad that poem was, and how insulted he was at having been exposed to it.

A "verbal monstrosity," he called it. "Silly, garbled, involuted, affected, murky nonsense," he characterized such lines as:

To wake walking to be being to seek between
To live long and devour demons collide
At the junction of the measures and the mean
Where the lions lounge in their pride . . .

. . . Obviously Mr. Coblenz, despite his wide explorations in the realm of the spirit, has yet to find himself at that excruciatingly maddening junction of the measures and the mean or in any land where lions lounge in their pride. Unquestionably he's never awakened walking. When he sleeps he sleeps: when he walks he walks. And after all, who ever heard of anyone devouring demons? That guy McHugh is nuts, sure.
New York City

GEROLD FRANK

Letters to Russia

SIR: As part of the nationwide observance of June 22, which marks the second anniversary of the German invasion of the Soviet Union, Russian War Relief is conducting a "Write to Russia" campaign. We are asking millions of Americans who in the past have sent precious medical supplies, food concentrates, seeds and clothing to the Russian people, to send something else—something equally precious—a letter to a Russian ally, "To a Red Army Man," "To a Doctor on the Russian Front," "To a Volunteer Nurse," "Farmer, Defense Worker, Student, Scientist, Writer, Artist," etc.

Letters so addressed can be sent in care of any local Russian War Relief Committee or the national headquarters, 11 East Thirty-fifth Street, New York City. We will transmit these letters, along with the relief supplies that we are sending in ever increasing quantities. The letters will add a warm and personal touch to this material aid and help to encourage the Russian people as they enter their third year of war. They will also help to achieve the firm basis of friendship without which we cannot hope to establish a lasting peace. . . .

EDWARD C. CARTER, President,
Russian War Relief, Inc.

New York City

[We are printing below part of a letter from Thomas Mann which is being sent to Russia through Russian War Relief, Inc. — THE EDITORS]

Dear Alexey Tolstoy:

The opportunity to send letters of greeting to Russia, offered by the New York branch of the Russian War Relief to us in America, comes unexpectedly, and I gratefully avail myself of it. The selection of the addressee is at my discretion—can you be surprised, then, that I am writing to you? You bear the name of the gigantic literary creator whom next to Goethe I love and admire most in the whole spiritual world, and to

whom I as an author feel most indebted. You are a Russian author yourself, endowed with all the solemnity of Russian narrative tradition; and just the other day I was reminded of your strong and fine talent when I read your forceful war story, "The Stories of Ivan Sudaryev," in the Moscow magazine, *Internationale Literatur*. . . .

Thus I am writing to you and greet in you the whole great Russian people before whose deeds and suffering during the last two years I bow my head in deep awe and admiration. I greet you from a country whose comparative security and remoteness from war fills some of its more sensitive civilians with painful embarrassment in view of what invaded Russia has to bear and bears for all of us. It is so easy to say: "Russia does not fight and suffer for our sake, she does us no favors, for she has nothing but the enemy in common with the Western democracies, and she bleeds and vanquishes only for herself, for little Mother Russia, for the liberation of her soil from the power of this enemy who perchance is also our enemy." Perchance? Not perchance! For this nefarious enemy is the enemy of mankind, the denier of all things spiritual and divine in man, the negator of all his inborn striving for the higher, better, truer and more just, and it is a matter of definite fact that in this war Russia not only fights for herself, but at the same time for all of us, for all men and their freedom—however much her socialist idea of freedom may differ from that of the Western democracies. . . .

I know of course—and we all know—that there are individuals and groups in the democracies who . . . have little regard for the similarities compared to the dissimilarities between the political and economic form of life of the Soviet Union and that of the West. They are groups and individuals who fear Russia, who fear socialism, because they detest a development upon which we others base all our hopes: the unification of socialism and democracy, the creation of a new equilibrium of freedom and equality determining the national and international lives of the peoples, which does justice to the individual values and at the same time to those of the community. . . . It may be that they do not consciously wish for or promote the victory of Nazi Germany at this time—even they can do this no longer. And yet, it is they upon whose silent sympathy and secret help the Hitlers and Goebbels are counting. . . .

Do not misunderstand me! I do not speak of the American people and their highest leaders, but expressly of individuals and groups only, of those patrons of fascism who are not without influence anywhere and, as it is, fascism has such patrons throughout the world. You may be assured, and your countrymen may be assured, that in the American people as well as in the English people the deepest sympathy for Russia and her heroic struggle is alive, and that especially the American intelligentsia . . . tirelessly champion the necessity for good relations between Russia and America and continued close coöperation of the two peoples. . . . Perhaps you will reply, that in our epoch the influence of the intelligentsia upon the course of public events has greatly diminished. Be that as it may, there still remains the people, there remains the Anglo-Saxon democracy, in whose strength one may have sufficient trust to stay convinced that in the end the great decisions will be made according to the will of the peoples and not to that of interests filled with fear and hatred.

Let me conclude, dear Alexey Tolstoy, with a word of love and admiration for the great, holy, deeply human culture of Russia, to which my life, my personal education owes so much! . . . I congratulate you, Alexey Tolstoy, on the honor of standing in this tradition, and on the privilege of serving it in an atmosphere of social rejuvenation and faith in the future.

THOMAS MANN

Pacific Palisades, Calif.

Health Insurance v. Preventive Medicine

SIR: The section on "The Health Program," in your enlightening "Charter for America" [April 19] seems to us to embody a misconception regarding health insurance. You comment on the omission of health insurance from the recommendations of the National Resources Planning Board as "in one respect fortunate, since it helps to transfer the center of interest to a far more important aspect of the health problem"—the prevention, as distinguished from the care, of illness. Now this distinction is a false one, for not only is health insurance consistent with programs of prevention of illness, but such programs have frequently been inaugurated and intensified by the very means of establishing such insurance.

The International Social Insurance Conference was merely recording the actual experience of many a country when it stated in 1938 that sickness insurance has the "twofold task" of the prevention of illness as well as the restoration of health. Health-insurance systems have worked effectively to improve housing conditions, to eliminate slums, to spread health information, to raise rural sanitation standards, to check social diseases and to remove many another obstacle to health.

In short, far from being an argument against immediate health-insurance proposals, the dire need of encouraging the growth of preventive medicine is instead one of the strongest arguments for it. I realize, of course, that you too favor health insurance, but it is important for all its friends to appreciate that their interest in preventive methods does not clash with it.

SOLOMON F. BLOOM, Associate Secretary,
American Association for Social Security

New York City

[There is of course no necessary conflict between health insurance and preventive medicine. Both should be parts of a single system. Nevertheless, they are not identical, and there is a tendency for uninformed laymen to emphasize the need for care of the sick without understanding the possibility of preventing sickness. We should be glad to see the agitation of progressives in this country support a comprehensive modern health program (including insurance) rather than being concentrated on insurance without consideration of the better organization of our whole system of medical care. — THE EDITORS]

From The New Republic Mail Bag

We wish to thank the many readers of The New Republic who sent us copies of the letters they had addressed to their congressional representatives on behalf of Robert Morss Lovett, Goodwin Watson, William E. Dodd and Frederick L. Schuman. We have been able to answer only a fraction of the correspondence, and would like to have this serve as an acknowledgment of all the letters we received.

Eduardo Lopez Tizol, an attorney of San Juan, Puerto Rico, writes telling us that the only aspiration of Puerto Rico is to become a state of the union. "Our education, for forty-five years," Señor Tizol writes, "has been American and we feel and are American citizens in a territory of the United States, called Puerto Rico. . . . All Puerto Rico is willing to be a new state, rejecting independence or any other system tending to separate us from our lovely country: the United States of America."

A letter of praise from C. I. Watkins, a new reader from New Matamoras, Ohio. Mr. Watkins writes "After reading this sample copy, I find that your pages contain very highly potent and concentrated antiseptic reading matter such as is needed to purify and stop the putrefaction that is going on in the 'high places' throughout the world."

Books in Review

Beyond Poetry

T. S. ELIOT's "Four Quartets" is one of those rare books that can be enjoyed without being understood. I have heard people of good judgment praising it and, in the same breath, confessing that they didn't know what the poet intended to say. Apparently he gave them a few noble visions and a general impression of austerity, learning, goodness and even saintliness. Reading the book for the first time, I remembered the Swedenborgian sermons to which I half-listened every Sunday morning during my boyhood; I didn't grasp their meaning, but I knew that Bishop Pendleton was a good man and a scholar, and I went home to dinner with a pleasurable feeling of elevation.

Perhaps that is the best way of approaching "Four Quartets." But if the reader insists on understanding as well as admiring the book, he might begin with the article on mysticism in the *Encyclopedia Britannica*; or better still by turning to the third chapter of Aldous Huxley's "Gray Eminence," which is perhaps the simplest statement of the mystical way. If the nearest library has the spring, 1941, issue of *The Southern Review*, he might also read the essay on "East Coker" by James Johnson Sweeney, who is a profound student and Scotland Yard inspector of Eliot's later work.

Even after this preparation, there are points that may still escape the reader. My own difficulties began with the second word of the title: why are these poems called quartets? They seem to be spoken in a single voice, that of the author, and each of them is divided into five parts instead of four. The title of the first poem is equally mysterious, considering that the three others have now been explained by the author or his critics. *East Coker* is supposed to be the birthplace of Sir Thomas Elyot, author of "The Boke Named the *Gouverneur*," as well as being the original home of the Eliot family as a whole. It is therefore an appropriate title for a poem that is a mixture of history and autobiography. The *Dry Salvages*—pronounced to rhyme with "assuages"—is a small group of rocks, with a beacon, off the Massachusetts coast; and the name is set above a poem that deals with the river of time and the sea of timelessness. Little Gidding was the site of an Anglican monastic community that Eliot might have joined, if he had lived in the seventeenth century. But what about *Burnt Norton*, which F. O. Matthiessen says is a manor in Gloucestershire? What is its connection with a poem describing an ecstatic vision? No matter how much he explains, and how many points his critics elucidate, Eliot always leaves us with unanswered questions. Reading his poems is a little like working over a crossword puzzle that will never be completely solved.

But there can be no doubt concerning his general purpose in "Four Quartets." The book deals with mysticism

⁴ *Four Quartets*, by T. S. Eliot. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. 39 pages. \$2.

in its dictionary definition—that is, with the belief in the possibility of union with the divine nature, and the description of methods by which that moment of union may be achieved. It belongs to the mystical tradition that goes back to Vedic days, that was carried to the West by the Neo-Platonists, that was introduced to Christianity by the pseudo-Dionysius in the fifth century, that was Latinized by Scotus Erigena four centuries later, that was continued during the Middle Ages by a whole band of saints and heretics—French, German, Spanish and English—that declined in the days of the Enlightenment, and that is now being revived in our own time of troubles. Eliot's principal source is St. John of the Cross, the Spanish mystic who died in 1591, but he also borrowed largely from the *Bhagavad Gita* and, I am told, from the anchoress Juliana of Norwich, who wrote "XVI Revelations of Divine Love" and died in 1443 at the age of a hundred. He might have borrowed from many other sources without destroying the unity of his work, for the mystical tradition has changed very little from age to age or from nation to nation. Eliot is not trying to remake that tradition, but simply to recapture it. Even his obscurity is a convention often followed by mystical writers. He says at one point:

There is only the fight to recover what has been lost
And found and lost again and again: and now, under conditions
That seem unpropitious.

What has been found and lost again is the intuition of pure being, the timeless moment of union with the divine. In order to recover it, two difficult steps must be taken. The first is to achieve the good life by means of what Eliot describes as "prayer, observance, discipline, thought and action"—in other words, the practices that used to be demanded of every pious Christian. The second step should be taken only by those who intend to follow the mystic or contemplative life. It consists in a rigorous attempt to empty the mind of all passions, fancies, analytical ideas and mere distractions, while directing one's thoughts solely toward union with God. The process is described at length in the third section of "East Coker," and more briefly in "Burnt Norton":

Descend lower, descend only
Into the world of perpetual solitude,
World not world, but that which is not world,
Internal darkness, deprivation
And destitution of all property,
Desiccation of the world of sense,
Evacuation of the world of fancy,
Inoperancy of the world of spirit.

The reward that the mystic receives for leading the good life and for divesting himself of selfhood is the ecstatic sense of oneness with the divine nature. Eliot describes this ecstasy in many different fashions. Sometimes it is the moment when "the light is still at the still point of the turning world," and sometimes "the point of inter-

section of the timeless with time." Again it may be "the release from action and suffering," or "a condition of complete simplicity (costing not less than everything)," or else a "music heard so deeply that it is not heard at all, but you are the music while the music lasts." However described, it is for Eliot the central experience of a lifetime; and he even suggests that history itself is a pattern composed of these timeless moments—

When the tongues of flame are in-folded
Into a crowned knot of fire
And the fire and the rose are one.

I am not qualified to pass on the truth or value of the moral system that Eliot is expounding. Theologians might say that, like all mystics, he is running a grave danger of heresy. Even a layman feels that Eliot's new faith, instead of being Catholic or Anglo-Catholic, has a moral atmosphere that is a curious mixture of Calvinism and Buddhism: it is Calvinist and even New England Congregational in its finely drawn scruples; it is Buddhist in its utter rejection of the world. More interesting to most readers is the fact that Eliot's preoccupation with the contemplative life seems to be carrying him into an abstract sphere beyond the limits of poetry.

It is true that he is still extremely interested in the use of language—in finding "the common word exact without vulgarity, the formal word precise but not pedantic." He is interested in putting words together into a pattern which, like a Chinese jar, "still moves perpetually in its stillness." The pattern of Eliot's verse has never been more skillful and intricate than it is in "Four Quartets." But the music of poetry, its sense of everyday life and the images with which it recaptures the floating world—all these are matters beneath the notice of a man bent on union with the ineffable. He is even trying to put them out of his mind, by the contemplative process that leads to "desiccation of the world of sense, evacuation of the world of fancy"—in short, to the total destruction of all the world where poetry is accustomed to dwell. There is one point at which he reveals his weariness over the business of writing verse. After a lyric that repeats several themes from "The Waste Land," he says prosaically:

That was a way of putting it—not very satisfactory:
A periphrastic study in a worn-out poetical fashion,
Leaving one still with the intolerable wrestle
With words and meanings. The poetry does not matter.

Wrestling with words and meanings, he thereupon writes a blank-verse passage that would have read much better if it had been printed as ordinary prose. Indeed, much of "Four Quartets" is on this same level of bare, abstract and sometimes hermetic expression; it seems to belong in some handbook of mystical philosophy. Much of it, on the other hand, is the sort of poetry that Eliot writes at his best, and the book includes some of his finest lyrics. But one feels that he now writes good poetry by habit or by a talent he is unable to suppress, rather than by intention. He is almost like a skillful bridge player who has abandoned cards as a frivolous occupation, but who sometimes forgets himself and plays a perfect hand.

MALCOLM COWLEY

Isak Dinesen

Winter's Tales, by Isak Dinesen. New York: Random House. 313 pages. \$2.50.

IN THE WORLD OF NATURE, a sudden variation of type is an event of greatest interest to scientists, who call the result of this phenomenon a "sport." In the world of literature a similar mutation has no definitive name, but it is a rare and wonderful occurrence and such a book is not soon forgotten. In the year 1934 a literary sport of this type was a book by an unknown European writing under an assumed name. The book was a collection of stories so entirely unique in their very intention that among contemporary works they had a strangely anachronistic effect; the book was reminiscent of nothing written in this century, and to make analogies and comparisons one had to think back to Boccaccio, or perhaps to the German romantics. For to begin with, the author had reverted to a medium of expression that in these days is almost obsolete, the most ancient and the purest form of fiction: the tale. "Seven Gothic Tales," by Isak Dinesen, is a group of exquisite, weird, almost strangely brilliant stories; their appearance marked the debut of an extraordinary talent.

The second book by Isak Dinesen followed about four years later, and those who had expected a similar performance were surprised, but hardly disappointed. "Out of Africa," a book concerning the years that the author lived on a coffee plantation in British Kenya, is a simple and tender personal document, written with a controlled and elegiac severity altogether different from the dark Gothic recklessness of the tales. Meanwhile, the identity of the author had been revealed; Isak Dinesen is the pen name of a Danish woman, who writes in English.

"Winter's Tales" is in suite with her first book. Traditionally, the tale has a dual purpose: to delight and to point a moral. Isak Dinesen unquestionably fulfills the first of these requirements. She is lavish with the use of the tale-teller's chief stock-in-trade, the delight of astonishment. Masquerade, trickery, swift twists of fortune are only the cruder kinds of astonishment. The real surprise is in the writing itself: the unexpected, slightly archaic word combinations, the tightrope grace of the sentences themselves. She writes of the green beech forests in Denmark in the month of May, or of a young scribe looking out into the snowy Parisian night beneath the shadow of Notre Dame—and immediately the image has come alive within the matrix of its proper atmosphere.

The second purpose of the tale, the moral point, may need some explanation. For the morality of the tale is odd and arbitrary, having little or no relation to ordinary everyday ethics, and determined solely by the tale-teller himself. In the true tale the characters are bound in the end to get what is coming to them; however, the justice is an erratic justice. Thus in the first story of this new collection, "The Sailor-Boy's Tale," the young protagonist rescues a falcon caught in the rigging of a mast, and because of this action he is later spared punishment for a murder he has committed. The tale-teller assumes the responsibility of God, and grants to his characters a moral freedom accountable only to the author himself. And furthermore, he ensures the characters the necessary worldly

power to use this freedom; therefore, the characters of the tale are traditionally the aristocratic and the royal, in the spirit if not in the flesh. Isak Dinesen writes of foot-loose travelers, of despots and a king, and of "that fascinating and irresistible personage, perhaps the most fascinating and irresistible in the whole world: the dreamer whose dreams come true." It is this quality of headlong freedom and recklessness that gives to the characters of "Winter's Tales" their suave and often crazy charm.

Each of these eleven tales is a graceful and finished story. "Sorrow Acre," perhaps the best, deals with the tyranny and defeat of an old lord by a victim more powerful than he. "Peter and Rosa" is an idyll of two young dreamers. "Alkmene" tells of a slightly mad young girl who went to town to watch a public execution. However, there is no story in "Winter's Tales" of quite the same freakish brilliance as the best of the "Seven Gothic Tales." Perhaps this slight sense of disappointment is due to the fact that, having already once entered the imagination of Isak Dinesen, as a traveler enters a foreign land, the delight of surprise on a return visit is not so keen. But by any standards, except the precedent that Isak Dinesen has set for herself, these are tales of the highest excellence.

CARSON MCCULLERS

Hands Across the Sea

The English People: Impressions and Observations, by D. W. Brogan. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 296 pages. \$3.

THIS MAY BE THE BOOK we have been waiting for. That there is in this war more loose talk about the iniquities of the English than there was in the last, no one who keeps his ears open will deny. Graduates of P. S. 29, forty years ago, are still fighting the Revolution. The pacifist generation of the 1930's found in 1939 a scapegoat on whom it could heap its sense of guilt for having ignored the Nazi revolution. The American Irish are never silent, nor are those inveterately fearful of British sleight-of-hand in international poker. Even the reader of *The New Republic* is not so well informed about the England of 1943 as he ought to be. His investigations have more often been conducted in Soho than Seaham Harbor. Though Professor Brogan lectures at Cambridge, he has a Harvard degree and has, as well, a sobering knowledge of the American hinterland. He is disturbed by this variously pitched muttering. His book is an attempt to disabuse the mutterers of their righteousness.

Notable Books: January through May, 1943

Interim Selections by the Editors

FICTION

- Citizen Tom Paine, by Howard Fast. Duell, Sloan and Pearce. \$2.75.
 Never Call Retreat, by Joseph Freeman. Farrar and Rinehart. \$3.
 The Ministry of Fear, by Graham Greene. Viking. \$2.50.
 Capricornia, by Xavier Herbert. Appleton. \$3.
 Men from Nowhere, by Jean Malaquais. L. B. Fischer. \$2.50.
 Dark Wedding, by Ramon Sender. Doubleday, Doran. \$2.50.
 Tucker's People, by Ira Wolfert. L. B. Fischer. \$3.

GENERAL

- Business as a System of Power, by Robert A. Brady. Columbia. \$3.
 The English People, by D. W. Brogan. Knopf. \$3.
 The Year of Decision, by Bernard De Voto. Little, Brown. \$3.50.
 Four Quartets, by T. S. Eliot. Harcourt, Brace. \$2.
 South American Journey, by Waldo Frank. Duell, Sloan and Pearce. \$3.
 Lee's Lieutenants, Vol. II, by Douglas S. Freeman. Scribner's. \$5.
 Bound for Glory, by Woody Guthrie. Dutton. \$3.
 Exploring the Dangerous Trades, by Alice Hamilton, M.D. Little, Brown. \$3.
 The Mind and Faith of Justice Holmes, edited by Max Lerner. Little, Brown. \$4.
 George Washington Carver, by Rackham Holt. Doubleday, Doran. \$3.50.
 William Butler Yeats, by Joseph Hone. Macmillan. \$6.

- The Hero in History, by Sidney Hook. John Day. \$2.50.
 Education for Freedom, by Robert M. Hutchins. Louisiana. \$1.50.
 The Autobiography of a Curmudgeon, by Harold L. Ickes. Reynal and Hitchcock. \$3.
 Brothers Under the Skin, by Carey McWilliams. Little, Brown. \$3.
 Mount Allegro, by Jerre Mangione. Houghton Mifflin. \$2.50.
 Heathen Days, by H. L. Mencken. Knopf. \$3.
 The Nature and Destiny of Man, Vol. II, by Reinhold Niebuhr. Scribner's. \$2.75.
 The World of Sholom Aleichem, by Maurice Samuel. Knopf. \$3.
 The World of Yesterday, by Stefan Zweig. Viking. \$3.

THE WAR

- Moscow Dateline, by Henry C. Cassidy. Houghton Mifflin. \$3.
 Appeasement's Child, by Thomas J. Hamilton. Knopf. \$3.
 Into the Valley, by John Hersey. Knopf. \$2.
 They Call It Pacific, by Clark Lee. Viking. \$3.
 The Last Days of Sevastopol, by Boris Voyetekhov. Knopf. \$2.50.
 Miracle in Hellas, by Betty Wason. Macmillan. \$2.75.
 Singapore Is Silent, by George Weller. Harcourt, Brace. \$3.
 We Cannot Escape History, by John T. Whitaker. Macmillan. \$2.75.
 One World, by Wendell Willkie. Simon and Schuster. Paper, \$1; cloth, \$2.
 Battle for the Solomons, by Ira Wolfert. Houghton Mifflin. \$3.

Selected by
THE NEW REPUBLIC
Notable Books
of 1943

**We Cannot
Escape History**

By John T. Whitaker

"The best and soundest book yet written covering the entire field of the war fronts."

—*Los Angeles Times.* \$2.75

**William Butler
Yeats: 1865-1939**

By Joseph Hone

"This first full record of Yeats's life is certainly one of the most enthralling books of the year."—*The Nation.* \$6.00

Miracle in Hellas

THE GREEKS FIGHT ON

By Betty Wason

"An impassioned tribute to a courageous people who are putting up perhaps the most effective resistance of any of the so-called conquered nations. It leaves the reader filled with humble admiration."

—*N. Y. Times.* \$2.75

The Macmillan Co., New York

Some obstacles may stand in the way of the book's success. That it is blunt is all to the good. Professor Brogan rightly believes that the two countries should not pussy-foot in speaking of each other. Yet it is conceivable that some readers will see in this book another example of axiomatic British arrogance. His constant use of parallel instances in our history to explain the failure of the English to solve certain of their problems is astute, but the device would be more effective if these parallels (which are usually exact) had occasionally been employed to underline commendable solutions in the two countries. The impression might thus have been created that we have sometimes succeeded as well as sinned alike—which is true. One small defect could easily be corrected by omitting some of the references to minor crises and obscure officials.

I mention these blemishes—if they are that—because the book seems to me capable of doing great good. Its large view and the lightness of its learning should ingratiate it with anyone ripe for persuasion. It is, in effect, a much-needed summary of the transformations taking place in contemporary England.

More impressive than the arguments of the particular chapters are the flashes of illumination which show up the old landscape in a new light. I can instance the discerning account of the fateful stratifications in English life caused by the making-over into public schools of the old educational foundations; the exposition of the difference between democracy in America (the assumption "that inherent differences in ability will not find their expression thwarted by artificial barriers") and in England ("the making and alteration of the law, the continued exercise of authority derived from the people's will"); the witty apology for the way England is "run under wraps." In this last particular the author uncovers, I believe, one of the main sources of American suspicion of England. We like our economic and political scandals notorious; we denigrate our clay-footed heroes; we banish maladroitness politicians like Al Smith and Hoover. That the English draw a decent veil over such events and persons makes us believe corruption and incompetence are being kept from the reporter's eye. (Witness American excitement over the abdication of Edward VIII.) A nation which has no scandals and no failures cannot be a real democracy.

As for the individual chapters, that on education scores off America in pointing out the excellent standards maintained by small and obscure English high schools, of which we know little, in comparison with the dangerous decline in the quality of work done in our secondary schools, where almost any diversion "counts" for credit. It may startle even a Rhodes Scholar to learn that more than half the candidates who get firsts at Oxford and Cambridge now come from grant-earning schools. The chapter on English religion, though it explains patiently the odd patchwork of the Establishment, is not so necessary to Professor Brogan's purpose as he seems to believe. We shall never understand tithes, but if the English like them, they can keep them. We, too, cherish a few antediluvian survivals, as, for example, the Electoral College.

India is another matter. Professor Brogan knows that the India question is the readiest stick with which an American can beat an Englishman. His chapter on it is long and tortuous. In it his political philosophy emerges clearly, that man may be moral but society is immoral, that

a statesman's choice is inevitably between the bad and the less bad. His argument comes down to this: India as a nation is a creation of British rule, but released from this rule, she may not survive as a nation; Indian sympathizers, including those who write indignantly in *The New Republic*, may get chaos or revolution or civil war or all that Gandhi believes in (which is more than independence), once England pulls out. A permitted Indian vote on participation in the war might have been negative. What, then, would have been the chances in the Far East of the United Nations? In sum, Professor Brogan asks that the British raj be judged, not "by Utopian standards, but by reasonable standards of what can be expected of weak, selfish, fallible humans put in an unprecedented situation." The chapter explains much and proposes little, but the author could ask—indeed, he implies the question: can any American do better with *our* India, the Negro problem?

For the rest—"The English at War" stirs the blood. The last chapter, "The English and the Outside World," is fated to become an anthology piece. It contains the witty defense of Hollywood as our best propagandist in England that the newspaper reviewers have already pounced on. Which proves that what Americans still like most from the English is praise.

WILLARD THORP

Growing Pains

The Lights Around the Shore, by Jerome Weidman. New York: Simon and Schuster. 279 pages. \$2.50.

FIVE YEARS AGO Jerome Weidman's second book, "What's in It for Me?" was criticized for "anti-Semitism." The League of American Writers, among other groups, made this charge, although no one on the executive board but myself had read the book or even considered it necessary to do so before making the accusation. It was enough that in a book about Jews by a Jewish writer, one character was a villain. Mr. Weidman was bewildered but contrite. Obviously the only course was henceforth never to use his own background and to make all of his bastards Lutheran. The rich treasure of his own background is denied him, the highly moral force of his early work must now be diluted with caution. This might be the explanation for the feebleness of the last two Weidman novels, for in both "I'll Never Go There Any More" and "The Lights Around the Shore" the plots seem a little wild, the characters almost hysterically unreal; a floor is lacking.

Like the hero of "I'll Never Go There Any More," the young boy in the new novel finds himself stepping into a nest of goblins. Peter is a real boy, though dimly drawn, fading out before the other characters. At fifteen, in the year 1939, he is taken abroad by his beautiful Aunt Fini ostensibly to visit his Hungarian grandparents for the first time. On the boat he learns that his Aunt Fini, hitherto his idol, is keeping something from him, has lied to him about the destination of the boat, and strange terrors are in the air. A strident dress-designer named Madame Margot chooses to join forces with Fini and Peter, and for Peter's sake tries to find the answer to Fini's curious behavior. In Paris Peter finds himself deserted by both women, frightened by Fini's lover, who seems to the boy responsible for the collapse of his little world. What was

Selected by
The New Republic
as notable books of 1943

Moscow Dateline

BY HENRY C. CASSIDY

The man for whom Stalin wrote that famous letter on the second front gives us his own intimate, up-to-the-last-minute view of Russia's government, her people, her war and her chance. \$3.00

Battle for the Solomons

BY IRA WOLFERT

This book contains Ira Wolfert's three Pulitzer Prize dispatches and in addition gives a complete picture of the greatest sea victory in American history. \$2.00

MOUNT ALLEGRO

BY JERRE MANGIONE

In this book the exuberant Sicilian temper meets the Yankee tempo. Here you get fireworks in gallon jugs, here Pan pumps the player piano and, most of all, here you get an inspiring picture of those who are Americans by choice. \$2.50

HOUGHTON MIFFLIN CO.

to have been a pleasure trip becomes a nightmare of betrayals, of sinister shadows, a forced awakening to the evil in the world.

The idea of this book is far superior to its execution, which is blurred up to the final chapter. A boy, happy in simple things, his Scout uniform, his pedometer wristwatch, his East Seventh Street home, grows up almost overnight through sudden knowledge, learning that loved ones betray you, evil is everywhere, war is possible, one's own people are strangers, there is no security anywhere, you are always alone, and to be grown up is only that. Home again with his unwanted knowledge and Aunt Fini fatally ill, Peter looks about with new eyes and sees that his home is really very tiny, East Seventh Street is not the world, that perhaps his parents are poor people—certainly they are not real Americans any more than they are real Hungarians like their own parents, but lost between two worlds, belonging nowhere. Peter's dawning perceptions are truly drawn, his deductions from events are believable even though the events themselves are not. The shadow of mystery used to lure the reader on is not actually justified, for the plot is not that amazing. In spite of elaborate records of their speech and their appearance, it is practically impossible to visualize any of the characters, for Mr. Weidman's descriptions seem somehow done with the camera too close—you see the fraternity pin and the five o'clock shadow but you don't see the person. This is a better book than the previous one, but the punch isn't there, and I'm not sure the new careful tenderness is as valuable. Not many can use brass knuckles as well as the old Weidman, after all.

DAWN POWELL

Labor in Our Times

The Tragedy of European Labor: 1918-1939, by Adolf Sturmthal. New York: Columbia University Press. 379 pages. \$3.50.

MAX LERNER, writing early in 1941 after the publication of the Reuther plan, remarked somewhat sadly how little recent European events have done to preserve our fighting faith in labor as a creative social force. Sturmthal undertakes to establish the factual record of this costly failure of European labor in the period between the two wars. A close observer for many years and in many lands, he provides a much needed picture of the social crisis that engulfed European democracy.

The author is at his best when he mirrors a movement in one of its leaders. The portraits of a Herman Müller, Hilferding, Déat, Léon Blum, Snowden or MacDonald give a faithful reflection of the basic weaknesses and the mediocrities of the parties they were called upon to "lead." Sturmthal also very usefully debunks some widespread historical myths. The story, as told by the author, does not uphold those who attribute the main responsibility for labor's failure to its disunity and to its split into a communist and a socialist wing. Unity may be among the prerequisites for success; it is by no means a panacea nor does it make up for the lack of a realistic program and of action which enlists popular support. Sturmthal's analysis is also helpful where he demonstrates, at least incidentally, that the antinomy of mild reformism and millennial socialism or communism lost much of its original significance, that the one is no longer to the "left" and the other to the "right," that class collaboration v. class struggle is no longer the real issue.

For Sturmthal European labor failed in its task—to make democracy workable in our times—because in spirit, in outlook and in methods, it acted like a mere pressure group, incapable of constructive political action. The author traces every error, every commission and omission of labor, back to its failure to depart from trade unionism (for even where the movement was organized in large political parties, it still remained, in the author's view, a narrow pressure group).

Now it is simply impossible to attribute to one constant reason the defeats of labor which occurred at such distant moments and under such varying conditions as the General Strike in Great Britain, the Popular Front in France and in Spain, the Viennese "Commune," the occupation of the factories in Italy and the Social Democratic Cabinets under Weimar. Sturmthal's explanation of all these pitfalls is that a clear-sighted political and long-range economic program was wanting. While this was true in some cases, programs for the thorough political and economic transformation of democratic society did form an important part of the propaganda of labor in many countries, at least from the time of the great depression. Even the German trade-union movement, for which Sturmthal's criticism is certainly most justified, had elaborated a rather appropriate program of national recovery. Especially the Belgian and French "plans" were technically well drawn and seemed at certain moments to have united behind them the millions of organized labor. However, they did not prevent defeat.

★ YALE ★

**SOVIET RUSSIA'S
FOREIGN POLICY 1939-1942**

By David J. Dallin
Translated by Leon Dennen

Reviews like these have carried this
important book into a second printing:

HANS KOHN in the *New Republic*:
"Learned, very readable treatise, based on a
thoughtful perusal of available documents.
... Dr. Dallin writes with impartiality and
great serenity of judgment."

WILLIAM HENRY CHAMBERLIN
in the *New York Times*:
"It should be strongly recommended reading
for the increasing number of Americans who
will have to deal with Russia in the diplo-
matic, military, and economic fields in the
years to come."

EUGENE LYONS
in the *American Mercury*:
"For the thinking minority, the book is a
'must.'"

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★

Worse, many of the protagonists of the European labor "plans," like De Man in Belgium and Belin and his friends in France, developed into Nazi collaborationists or quasi-fascists. Sturmthal explains this fact solely by their misled pacifism. Actually the rapid conversion of many a "planist" was due very often to the aloofness of the intellectual from labor's day-by-day struggle. It very often induces him to become an indiscriminate admirer of planning and efficiency, even if the planning is no longer democratic and the efficiency authoritarian.

Not the insight into the necessity of structural reforms but the power to realize them against the resistance of vested and shortsighted interests and of economic philistinism was lacking. Very often labor could have acquired this power only by strengthening its influence in society by what Sturmthal somewhat contemptuously calls "pressure-group" activities.

The author repeatedly warns American labor that pressure-group policies impede the smooth functioning of the democratic machinery. This reviewer does not agree with those who believe that a democratic state can subsist as a mere mediator between conflicting interests. But the problem of how to preserve the democratic process in a highly organized society cannot be solved simply by dissuading labor from using the means of increasing its strength while other groups exert their pressure unabatedly. Both the Reuther plan and Murray's proposal for labor representation in industrial councils are signs that American labor is outgrowing the stage of a mere pressure group. The fate which befell both proposals makes it unlikely that they will be realized as long as the weight of labor as a pressure group cannot be thrown into the balance.

The cleavage between the striving of trade unions for industrial democracy and labor's drive to achieve democratic planning should not exist. If labor in Britain and the United States is to become the pivot of a movement for a program of full production and employment in which all classes have a life interest, the chances of success will largely depend on whatever bargaining power is left in labor's hands.

Sturmthal's excellent conclusions depict the possible conditions under which a European labor movement will have to start anew, and stresses the responsibilities of American labor for its future course. To have recorded the lessons of the past is the merit of this book. But let us beware of an oversimplified formula the rigid adherence to which might cut the very roots of labor's strength. HENRY W. EHRMANN

Chamber of Horrors

Lilly Crackell, by Caroline Slade. New York: The Vanguard Press. 609 pages. \$3.

THIS LONG EPISODIC NOVEL, Dickensian both in its sympathy with all forms of suffering and in its unashamed melodrama, is a staggering account of the underside of American life. Compared with the miseries of the Crackells, the existence of the Joad family was idyllic, their grim odyssey a pleasant family outing. But "The Grapes of Wrath" remains a more terrifying and moving book because the reader eventually becomes insensitive to the deformities of body and mind and the tortured deaths that heap up in the pages of "Lilly Crackell." This is due to

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Mrs. Slade's failure to employ a rigid economy of means as well as to her flat projection of character and rudimentary sense of pace. But in spite of its weaknesses it is worth a dozen of the shapely, shrewd and at bottom sterile novels that the more fluent writers annually deposit.

Here are really two stories: the one of the millions of Americans who live in poverty, ignorance and filth, centering about the life of one of the lowliest of them; the other of those who from the heights of middle-class security, inspired by pity, condescension, the desire to interfere or lust for power, seek to help the underprivileged (a term they have conferred upon the poor). If I understand Mrs. Slade, she is attempting to say that for all her suffering (which is never minimized by romanticization or sentimentality) Lilly's life has been more meaningful than those of the wealthy Mrs. Anson Smith, whose only child was the first of Lilly's lovers, or of the virginal Ethel Stalling who devoted herself to social work but who was careful to make a good thing of it. Had Mrs. Slade explored this contrast more fully and endowed it with a symbolic frame of reference, she might have added a significant dimension to her novel.

GEORGE MAYBERRY

Contributors

ELMER LAND is the pseudonym of a writer whose position is such that it is inexpedient to reveal his identity.

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